

# Disability Now



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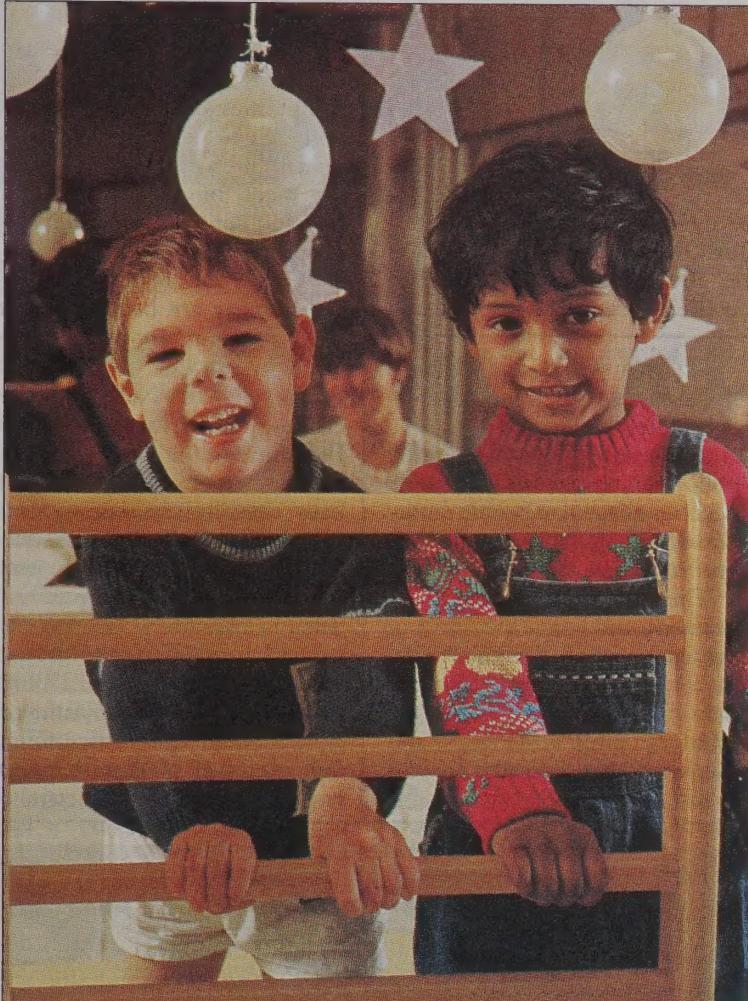
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Christmas spirit. Joe Mitchell, 4½, (left) and Millie Aktar, 4½, work with the ladder frame at Hornsey.

LEON MORRIS

*Every Original is signed.*

**Chairman**



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## Essex 300 facing courts

Up to 300 people in Essex who have fallen behind with their home help payments could find themselves in the courts.

Conservative controlled Essex county council issued a "pay up or be prosecuted" warning last month.

In one survey, the average debt was between £27 and £55. If the cases go to court the council gets its money back using a variety of debt-recovery methods, including warrant sales.

It is not unknown for small numbers of non-payers to be prosecuted, but the numbers involved in the Essex case have started alarm bells ringing among local disability and elderly groups.

Although Essex has had an on-off policy of charging for home helps since 1984, the present dispute began when means testing was introduced in April this year. Those deemed able to pay, including people on income support and attendance allowance,

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## Children's centre set to close

Fifty-five children with cerebral palsy are facing an uncertain future this Christmas as MPs fight to save a centre which is working towards conductive education.

The Hornsey Centre for Children Learning in London needs an extra £200,000 to keep it going for another year, and an immediate cash injection to tide it over until the end of January.

Conservative MP Hugh Rossi, whose constituency the centre is in, has written to Minister for Disabled People Nicholas Scott and the Environment Secretary Chris Patten. So has Social Democrat MP Rosie Barnes. Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn is trying to coordinate MP support.

"I want the Government to mount an immediate rescue operation," said Hugh Rossi. "After all, five million pounds has been given to Budapest."

"It's devastating for parents because they would have to go back to the other kind of education," said Maureen Lilley, who has just taken over as director.

Parents come from all over the country for assessments and advice for their children. Phy-

siotherapists, nurses and parents also come to observe the children and to train.

The Hornsey Centre has a Hungarian conductor, Agnes Borbery, visiting for short periods to supervise the teaching.

The centre asks the children's local authorities for £3,000 per year for a full-time nursery place – one sixth of the full cost – and £1,500 per child in the mother and child group, where the actual cost is £3,600 a year. In January it will ask them for £1,000 more for each child.

But five out of 14 local authorities pay nothing at all.

Now the centre, which has subsidised the places and has just furnished rooms to take children over five years old for the first time, has no money left.

"If the local authorities paid what we are asking we could fundraise and find the rest," said Maureen Lilley, who has visited

*Continued on page 5*

## Benefits up £900m

Thousands more disabled people will get cash from the Independent Living Fund next year as a result of the yearly uprating statement from Social Security Secretary Tony Newton. But a "niggardly" increase for people in residential care homes has not lifted the threat of an eviction crisis.

The Government is to spend over £900 million more on disability benefits from next April, out of a £5 billion benefits package.

The ILF budget will be doubled to £62 million. Pauline Thompson, ILF trustee and general secretary of the Disability Income Group, welcomed the increase and said: "We are looking at being able to help several thousand more people for

the first time. The message has got to be: 'get your claims in'."

Audrey Wise, Labour MP and member of the Commons' Social Services Committee, said: "The increase is a big help, though we've still not had an assurance that the ILF will be kept in being permanently."

But Sally Witcher of Disability Alliance is concerned that the increase shows a Government which wants to support disabled people through discretionary rather than statutory schemes: "It speaks volumes about the way this Government thinks disabled people should be provided for."

Most people in residential care homes will get £5 more per week, although physically disabled people under pension age or who have a mental handicap will

*Continued on page 2, table page 5*

## £250,000 dyslexia project

A "pioneering" research project into dyslexia and how schools can tackle it received a £250,000 gift from the Government last month.

The study will involve 20 dyslexic pupils from the Harris City Technology College (CTC) in Croydon. Its aim is to give them equal access to the National Curriculum with the rest of the pupils.

Harris CTC will work with Christchurch College in Cambridge during the three year project.

One special feature of the research will be an investigation into how computers can aid dyslexia.

### Essex 300 facing Courts

*Continued from page 1*

found themselves with a bill for the first time.

Around 11,000 out of 23,000 people pay £3.50 a week for up to 5 hours, and £7.50 for 5-10 hours. People on attendance allowance can get over 10 hours for £15 a week, people not on it get charged £17.50.

But only 6 per cent of people have paid up and the council says it is £104,000 in the red.

It says non-payers have been



Big Help Appeal cake is cut by Fflur Owen helped by TV personalities Elinor Jones and Roy Noble. 200 parents have joined the campaign for Bobath Cymru, a new therapy centre.

given the chance to appeal and in some cases charges have been waived or reduced.

According to Liberal Democrat councillor Joyce Robinson the appeal body is Conservative dominated and handling up to 200 cases a week, making the judging task "almost impossible" to carry out effectively.

Cliff Wallace, chairman of Southend-on-Sea Federation for the Handicapped, believes "up to a thousand" people may have already given up their home helps because of the charges.

Liz Biebuyck, of Age Concern in Essex, described the policy as "absolutely abhorrent".

"We would tolerate a charging policy which is fair. But one which impinges on people on income support is a very difficult one to swallow."

The council denies it is being excessive and hopes the threat of prosecution will be enough to make people pay up. A spokesman said prosecution would be seen as an ultimate deterrent and "we would be very sad if we had to use it".

## OTs look to AD 2000

Eight thousand more occupational therapists will be needed by the year 2000, said the College of Occupational Therapists last month.

During Occupational Therapy Week, from 12-16 November, recruiters tried to persuade more people to become OTs. An 80

per cent shortage is predicted for the end of the century.

At a conference organised by the College Princess Anne told people not to be afraid of using new technology at work, and Minister for Disabled People Nicholas Scott told employers to take on more disabled people.

### Benefits up £900m

*Continued from page 1*

get £15 a week extra.

People in nursing homes will get larger increases of up to £45 per week to allow for higher care costs.

Charities say the increases do nothing to tackle residential homes closing because they cannot meet the shortfall between fees and benefits, nor will it stop people being evicted.

"Care home residents on social security are being asked to share rooms or are being subsidised by others," said Theresa Perchard of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux.

"An increase of £5 a week will have virtually no impact," said David Tombs, social services director in Hereford and Worcester, where a private residential care home facing bankruptcy has called in receivers.

A survey in October of 39 local authorities by the Association of Metropolitan Authorities found that over half of them knew of homes which were reluctant to

accept elderly people on benefits.

While the Independent Healthcare Association, representing 400 residential and nursing home units, welcomed the rise in benefits for people in nursing homes, David Eking said the residential care increase was "niggardly". "A three per cent rise is quite inadequate to meet the underlying inflation rate," he commented.

The Government has also:

- given another £1 million to Motability
- ensured that people with both legs amputated will still get Mobility Allowance
- increased to £30 per week the amount carers can earn without reducing their Invalid Care Allowance
- extended the carer's premium so carers can get it up to eight weeks after the person they care for dies
- uprated Mobility Allowance, Attendance Allowance and Severe Disablement Allowance by 10.9 per cent, in line with inflation
- added £1 per week child benefit for the oldest child.

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## Schools get own budgets

Amid calls from a major voluntary organisation for more money for special needs education, the Government has proposed that special schools are given control of their own budgets.

At an October Spastics Society conference Robert Hancock, principal education adviser, said: "The massive changes within the state education system at present may deflect attention from those with special needs. It is always possible that fewer resources will be allocated to them."

At the conference, Former Education Secretary John MacGregor announced proposals which will permit but not require local education authorities to give special schools the power to manage their own budgets, known as Local Management of Schools (LMS).

Mr MacGregor said LMS had been introduced because "local decision-making combined with funding based on a clear and objective formula leads to better, more efficient use of resources."

Under LMS mainstream schools are funded mainly according to pupil numbers. Many headteachers fear this would not work for special schools. Now a new report by Touche Ross Management Consultants advises the Government to use a flexible funding policy that could take account of different special needs.

A final decision on the proposal is expected in the New Year.

*Extending local management of schools to special schools, free from Publications Despatch Centre, DES, Government Buildings, Honiton Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7.*

## Disability Now

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Actor and director Sir Richard Attenborough with the Union Dance Company at the site of Westminster and Chelsea Hospital, to be built in October 1992. The charity Arts for Health has advised the hospital on using music, paintings, mime and comedy to help people recover.

## Nursery first for Liverpool

Parents, professionals, politicians and charity workers gathered in Liverpool in October to unveil plans for the city's first integrated day nursery.

The new Early Years Centre will open next year and is being funded by The Spastics Society and Liverpool's city council and health authority.

The integrated nursery is being developed from the existing Tudor House nursery which currently provides day care for 15 pre-school disabled children. Tudor House will be moved to Millbrook College, the site of the new Centre, making it easier for children to get there.

The Centre will provide a nursery for up to 40 children under five, half of whom will have special needs.

An integrated nursery is just one of a handful of services that will be on offer. There will be information and resources rooms for parents, a toy and equipment library, and a play area. Visiting professionals will include physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, specialist teachers and a nursery doctor.

Having the medical and para-medical services under one roof was welcomed by parents. Sue Lane, whose disabled child has attended Tudor House for two years, said: "There is nothing worse than having to go to different parts of the city for different

services, spend hours sitting in waiting rooms and then feel uncomfortable because you don't know how to talk to the people you're seeing because you don't really know them."

Sue Hennessy, The Spastics Society's Early Years Coordinator, added to the list of advantages: "We will be able to offer expertise and knowledge before and after children start school. The Centre also has potential as a training facility for staff who work with able bodied and disabled children in a wide range of settings."

When a disabled child has to leave the nursery, parents and professionals will liaise with each other to place him in the most

appropriate school.

The Spastics Society has also redeveloped its services at Neath Hill in Milton Keynes to fit in with a recent survey of what people living there wanted.

Last month the Milton Keynes Resource Centre started classes in self-awareness, self-motivation, and decision-making. It has also started yoga and aromatherapy classes.

"We are trying to get a good mix of vocational courses and social skills courses," said coordinator Helen McNelly.

There is also a diploma course in computers with Keele University, and a business management course with the Cooperative Development Agency.



Bryan Little drawing at The Spastics Society's new Stockport Community Skills Group, where people with CP compose their own weekly schedules including sport, art and work skills.

## News subtitles go live

Deaf people can now watch live interviews by newsreaders Michael Buerk and Martyn Lewis on the BBC's Nine O'Clock News, and by Moira Stuart at weekends.

The BBC has added simultaneous captioning, called stenocaptioning, to the Nine O'Clock News and the weekend evening news bulletins.

This allows deaf viewers to read items which would previously not have been subtitled because they were too late or broadcast live.

"The technology has been used very successfully in America and we were waiting for it to become available here," said a BBC spokesperson.

She added that these subtitles would later be used on other news bulletins and current affairs programmes such as *Question Time*.

The BBC has spent £500,000 on the technique, and it will cost the same amount each year to run.

Stenocaptioning is on Ceefax page 888.

## Gloom over job hopes

As the 31 December consultation deadline for the Government's employment review looms, some groups are pessimistic about the chances of change.

Celia Johnson, head of employment and training policy at the Employment Department, said the Government was "seeking to build on the things that are already there."

Speaking at a National Council for Voluntary Organisation (NCVO) seminar on *Employment and training for people with disabilities*, she said the document "started from a position of considerable achievement." For example, the establishment of the Disablement Advisory Service and spending on disabled people at around £400m last year.

Among the audience were representatives from The Spastics Society, the Spinal Injuries Association and Deaf Accord.

Richard Wood, executive director of the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People, delivered a scathing condemnation of the document. "It has a very simplistic and naive view of the problems that face disabled people in trying to secure employment." Other issues had to be considered, such as housing, transport and education.

But Meredith Vivian, for the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), felt encouraged that the Government was acknowledging the need to make some changes to existing services as in many cases they were "clearly ineffective."

Angela Hadgipatares of Disability Alliance was disappointed and concerned that the case for anti-discrimination legislation had not been explored fully enough.

Ms Johnson assured the audience that Government had not closed the door to consultation: "The document is continuing what we've started but that doesn't mean it is too late to put in comments." Around 2,000 documents have been sent out.

*Comments to Employment Department, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London SW1H 9MF.*

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## IN PARLIAMENT

### Broadcasting Bill

A Government amendment ensuring that applicants for a Channel 3 or 5 licence must indicate how much they would promote access for people with hearing and sight disabilities was warmly welcomed during the report stage on 9 October. But it was proposed that audio descriptive services and signing should have a specific mention.

As Lady Darcy de Knayth (Ind) put it: "If no reference to sign language is made in the Bill, there is a very real possibility that applicants will think simply in terms of more subtitling when considering what to do to promote deaf people's understanding and enjoyment of programmes."

The amendment was eventually accepted after Earl Ferrers, for the Government, promised to ask the new Independent Television Commission (ITC) to make new applicants for licences aware of techniques for helping blind people and the possibilities of sign language.

Back in the Commons, on 25 October, the Lords successful amendment which had added educational, social action and documentary programmes to the quality requirements for Channels 3 and 5 licences was deleted (252 to 92). Arts Minister David Mellor argued that a long list of programme requirements would narrow the definition of diversity not widen it.

However Robin Corbett (Lab) argued that these programmes would be at risk when the accountants and advertisers took



**The Keep Warm, Keep Well campaign is launched by Minister for Disabled People Nicholas Scott, Baroness Hooper, Under-Secretary for Health, and TV presenter Pattie Coldwell. Get your free brochure (in 11 languages and audio-cassette) from Keep Warm, Keep Well, Freepost London SE5 7BP. Free telephone helpline: 0800 289 404.**

control. Documentaries are expensive to produce, he said, and peak time education or social action programmes don't attract the audience advertisers want.

The Lords felt so strongly about the amendment that they proposed another, limited to Channel 3, with all-party support. The Broadcasting Consortium (39 voluntary organisations) sent a supporting letter to the Prime Minister.

Baroness David argued that the diversity requirement stands apart from the list of protected programme categories and is not limited by it. It is not enough for these programmes to be shown on BBC2 and Channel 4, she said. "It is precisely because Channel 3 has large audiences that we want such programmes to be shown there."

Despite pressure not to force a vote, a vote went ahead and was narrowly lost (135 to 148).

**Pauline Rona Graham**



**William Waldegrave: new job**

## House Points

● The Disability Benefits Bill was launched last month in the new session of Parliament. It simplifies attendance allowance and mobility allowance by combining them into one Disability Living Allowance and introduces a new lower rate of £10 a week payable to about 140,000 disabled people who need care and another 150,000 disabled people with mobility problems who were not eligible before. A new means-tested Disability Working Allowance costing about £80m will top up the wages of some 50,000 disabled people in work so that they can take low paid jobs without losing benefit.

● The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act and the Broadcasting Act have received the royal assent.

● Ministerial changes: Kenneth Clarke has become Education Secretary, replacing John MacGregor. His place as Health Secretary has been taken over by William Waldegrave.

● Shadow spokesmen changes: Jeff Rooker MP replaces Tom Clarke MP on personal social services and community care and Tony Banks MP has taken over social security from Paul Flynn MP.

# Working Allowance criticised

Benefit changes to be introduced in 1992 will "increase the anxieties of disabled people" by imposing harsh medical assessments, said MPs in October.

The Conservative-dominated Social Services Committee criticised Disability Employment Credit (now the Disability Working Allowance) for discouraging disabled people from getting jobs and subjecting them to harsh medical examinations.

The Allowance will be reassessed every six months and relies on "partial capacity" for work. The committee said: "The proposal ...will only increase the anxieties of disabled people and is likely to increase the number of appeals made against decisions."

The Government has already met two of the report's recommendations by doubling the amount of money for the Independent Living Fund next year and extending mobility allowance to people with both legs amputated (see page 1).

The committee also wants Severe Disablement Allowance upgraded to the same level as Invalidity Benefit, to make the benefits system fairer for people who have never worked.

"If, as the Government said, they want to concentrate on those with greatest needs, this is an obvious anomaly," said Conservative Nicholas Winterton. "It might cost £180 million to upgrade SDA, but resources have to be found."

The committee said the ILF was "an example of community care at its best" and its grants should not have been limited to 16 to 74 year olds (DN July).

*Community care: social security for disabled people. Available soon from HMSO.*

## Quotes of the month

*"If politicians think it is worthwhile to provide sign interpretation for a mere handful of people attending those (party) conferences, is it not worthwhile considering, on just a few programmes on television – and we are only asking for it to be considered – providing it for 50,000 potential viewers?"* Lord Swinfen (Con) in the Lords debating on the Broadcasting Bill.

*"The whole point of a laundry list is to make sure that nothing gets left out".* Lord Birkett (Ind) commenting on Arts Minister David Mellor's complaint that adding social action, education and documentary programmes to positive programme requirements was like making a laundry list.

## Labour backs no-fault compensation

A Labour government would introduce no-fault compensation for medical accidents, including awards for babies who are brain-damaged at birth through medical negligence, said Labour MP Harriet Harman in October.

Hundreds of children who have cerebral palsy because they were deprived of oxygen at birth could benefit. The claimant would not have to prove medical negligence and more people would get awards, which would be decided within three months.

"The current compensation system is a cruel lottery in which a very few people win large sums, and most people get nothing," said Harriet Harman, who drew up a private member's bill outlining the proposals.

Claimants would give evidence to a panel of medical assessors or a compensation officer, appointed by the regional health authority.

If they are not satisfied with the panel's decision they can appeal to a board of lawyers, doc-



**Harriet Harman: new bill**

tors and lay people, who will take advice from different assessors.

If the person who becomes disabled was previously caring for someone else, then compensation will cover the cost of employing a carer.

Replying to Harriet Harman's proposals, Kenneth Clarke, then Health Secretary, said: "Establishing the truth in each case could be a costly and time consuming process and I do not think anyone has addressed the practical problem of deciding which unlucky patients should be compensated."

Dr John Bolt of the British Medical Association's working

party on medical claims, said: "The scheme is more sensible than giving out large lump sums."

The National Association of Health Authorities, the Haemophilia Society and the Medical Defence Union support no-fault compensation.

The promise comes as a leading legal firm has warned of a crisis in the National Health Service because of increasing compensation claims.

Capsticks, which represents 30 district health authorities, said hospital services would be cut because health authorities could expect to spend up to four per cent of their budgets on compensation by the year 2000, compared to one per cent now.

★ Harriet Harman has started an all-party parliamentary group on sickle cell anaemia, with Conservative MP Robert Hughes and Labour's Paul Boateng. It is to encourage research and raise awareness of the disease.

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## IN BRIEF

### Second language book

The first reading book aimed at visually impaired adults learning English as a second language was launched in October by the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

*When Paths Meet*, available in large print, braille or compact cassette, includes true stories such as a Vietnamese boat person's escape.

It is priced at £3.95 for blind and partially sighted people, and £6.95 for other members of the public.

All versions available from RNIB's production and distribution centre, tel: 0733 370777. Print and cassette versions from Avanti Books, tel: 0483 350155.

### Attention all passengers

Deaf people flying off for a Christmas break or meeting visitors from abroad can now check flight times using Heathrow airport's first Minicom system. The new system is at terminal 1's arrivals information desk and serves all terminals.

Tel: (081) 745 5184. 7am-11pm.

### Call me up sometime

People with compact disc players and computer screens may be able to call up over 12,000 pictures of disability aids and equipment by 1992, using a compact disc from the Disabled Living Foundation.

The disc shows products in colour and has sound for products such as the talking calculator.

If you are interested in the disc, contact Colin Perry or Ian McKinnell, DLF, 380/384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU, tel: (071) 289 6111.

### Care worker queries

"How do I interview potential care workers?" "How much should I pay?" "What if I can't cope with the paperwork?"

People buying in their own care can find the answers to these and other questions in a booklet from the Disablement Income Group, launched at Naide.

Recruiting and Employing a Personal Care Worker is £2.25 from DIG, Millmead Business Centre, Millmead Road, London N17 9QU.

### Signding counsellor

Britain will soon have its first qualified counsellor using sign language. Joan Hutton, whose husband is deaf, has started a two-year course at the Westminster Pastoral Foundation. The £20,000 course includes bereavement and marital breakdown and is sponsored by the Royal Association in Aid of the Deaf.

### Correction

Margaret Gilbert's review in the October edition was of *More Play Helps* and not *More Play Matters* as stated. *More Play Helps* is available from Heinemann Medical Books, £12.50.



The charge of the book brigade. Disabled people in Manchester crowded into the city's Central Library last month to celebrate the end of a new £250,000 scheme to improve its accessibility.

### Hornsey Centre to close

Continued from page 1

the Peto Institute in Budapest.

Along with 72 parents, she spoke to MPs from all parties last

month and has written to Nicholas Scott.

Jenny Steele said of her four-year-old son Jamie: "I can now leave him and walk about the house. Without this school

there'd be no way he'd be doing what he's doing now."

Jackie Mitchell, whose five-year-old son Joe is at the centre, said: "If the centre closed I'd keep him at home. I don't want him to be in a special school - I want him to be independent."

Her local authority, Barnet, won't pay for Joe and she fundraises at weekends to pay for him.

### BENEFIT CHANGES

Continued from page 2

#### MAIN BENEFIT RATES - APRIL 1991

	Old £	New £
Attendance Allowance		
higher.....	37.55	41.65
lower.....	25.05	27.80
Invalid Care Allowance.....	28.20	31.25
Invalidity Benefit		
invalidity pension.....	46.90	52.00
Invalidity Allowance		
higher.....	10.00	11.10
middle.....	6.20	6.90
lower.....	3.10	3.45
Mobility Allowance.....	26.25	29.10
Severe Disablement Allowance.....	28.20	31.25

#### INCOME SUPPORT

Maximum amounts for meals and accommodation in residential care homes

old age.....	155.00	160.00
very dependent elderly.....	170.00	185.00
physical disablement (under pension age).....	215.00	230.00
over pension age).....	155.00	160.00
mental handicap.....	180.00	195.00
maximum increase for Greater London.....	23.00	23.00
Nursing homes		
mental handicap.....	225.00	260.00
terminal illness.....	260.00	275.00
physical disablement under pension age.....	255.00	290.00
over pension age.....	210.00	255.00
maximum increase for Greater London.....	23.00	33.00

#### WAR PENSIONS

Disablement pensions (100 per cent rates)		
private or equivalent.....	76.60	84.90
officer (per annum).....	3994	4427

#### Constant attendance allowance

exceptional.....	61.40	68.00
intermediate.....	46.05	51.00
normal maximum.....	30.70	34.00
part-time.....	15.35	17.00

#### Exceptionally severe disablement allowance

.....	30.70	34.00
Severe disablement occupational allowance.....	15.35	17.00

#### INCOME-RELATED BENEFITS

Income support, housing benefit and community charge premiums added on to main benefits

Disability		
single.....	15.40	16.65
couple.....	22.10	23.90

#### Severe disability

single.....	28.20	31.25
couple (one qualifies).....	28.20	31.25
couple (both qualify).....	56.40	62.50

#### Disabled child

.....	15.40	16.65
Carer.....	10.00	10.80

#### EARNINGS RULES

Invalid care allowance.....	20.00	30.00
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## BDA in rights fight

A fight to secure "basic rights" for deaf people by the year 2000 was started by the British Deaf Association (BDA) during Deaf Awareness Week (29 October-4 November).

Manifesto 2000 highlights discrimination towards deaf people in education, training, employment, access to information and leisure.

Central to this discrimination is the failure to recognise British Sign Language (BSL) as the first language for most profoundly deaf people. There are only 84 qualified BSL interpreters for over 50,000 profoundly deaf people.

Granada TV and Video, sponsor of the week, unveiled its new video for deaf viewers, the VHS5.

Although colour keys are broadcast before certain programmes to identify characters, existing machines only record in black and white or in poor colour, leading to confusion over who is speaking. The VHS5 guarantees that the correct colours will be maintained. The video costs £429.99 to buy or £17.99 a month to rent.

## Social work signing

The Open University launched a new course in September for qualified social workers who wish to specialise in working with deaf people.

The Professional Diploma in Social Work with Deaf People is a two year course due to start in January 1991. It has been de-

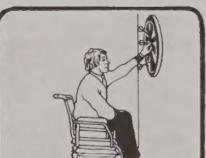
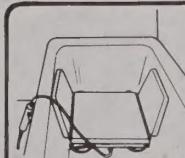
veloped with the help of £200,000 from the Government and £80,000 from the Royal National Institute for the Deaf.

For more information contact Linda Janes, Course Manager, Faculty of Social Sciences, The Open University, tel: 0908 652440.

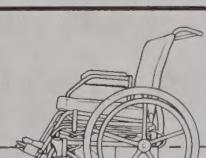
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**FACE TO FACE YOU STAND MORE CHANCE!**

# Letters to the Editor

Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ

## Ambulance cuts

May I add to your list of people with disabilities who will suffer from the proposed cuts in the London ambulance services? (DN October)

People with arthritis already find the difficulties of transport to hospital so great that many of them give up treatment they need because the pain and discomfort of the journeys and the long waits for transport outweigh the benefits. We have passed on their comments to Health Minister Virginia Bottomley.

A drop in the number of people with arthritis attending outpatient and other appointments is certainly one way of reducing the demand for ambulances!

Jean Gaffin  
Chief Executive  
Arthritis Care  
London SW1

## LWT apology

LWT owes an apology to Andy Kimpton-Nye (Letters, DN September) following his application as a researcher on *The Future of Religion*.

I can only say that our policy to interview all disabled applicants was introduced in July this year and we are clearly experiencing teething troubles. This is, nevertheless, a genuine attempt on LWT's part to improve access for the disabled to the few vacancies we have to offer.

Early in 1991 we shall be hosting a Disablism Awareness Seminar for

programme-makers, open to the entire broadcasting industry. We shall be ensuring a good turn-out of LWT editors and producers!

Helen Auty  
Training and Equal Opportunities Adviser  
London Weekend Television  
London SE1

## RNID's TV advertisement

I want to complain about the Royal National Institute for the Deaf advertisement shown during *Children of a Lesser God* on Channel 4 as part of National Deaf Awareness Week (29 October to 4 November).

The advert went along the lines of:  
"Is this alarm clock ringing?  
Is this baby crying?  
Is there somebody at the door?  
Is there a fire?  
Four million people in Britain can't be sure.  
Because they're deaf.  
To make a donation, please phone..."

I am staggered that the RNID, an organisation which is supposed to represent the interests of deaf people, can portray them so negatively, as though if you are deaf, you are therefore unable to take care of yourself, your children or your own safety.

The advert does not make any attempt to educate the hearing community; it merely reinforces deafness as simply a medical condition. According to that view, deaf people are powerless and helpless.

With this advert the RNID is betraying those people it claims to represent. The money made will never be able to undo the harm done. You are putting your own cause back by years.

Pauline Eyre  
Shape East Essex  
Loughton

## London Buses video

I was disappointed by the somewhat jaundiced report of the London Buses disability awareness training video, *I Just Assumed* (DN October).

The opinions expressed were those of only two members of quite a large audience at a press launch, and the "angry" representative of the Dial-a-Ride users' association had not even been invited, since this video is aimed at drivers of conventional buses rather than Dial-a-Rides.

And anyway, does it really need an actual diabetic to act symptoms of the condition, which would in any event have to be simulated? Is not the viewer himself falling into the trap if he assumes that actors might not have hidden disabilities? The presenter, Caroline Parker, who linked the sequences between the "bursts of reggae music" (in actual fact the title theme, used only at the beginning and the end), is herself profoundly deaf.

It is to the credit of companies like London Buses that, fortunately, they are not easily discouraged from trying to bring disability awareness to their staff, notwithstanding occasional unhelpful sniping from the sidelines.

John Wagstaff  
London Transport  
Unit for Disabled Passengers  
London SW1

## Oxford Street demo

If I may I would like to tell you why I went as far as I did, helping to block Oxford Street on 26 September and bringing the traffic to a complete standstill for an hour.

In normal circumstances I am an extremely law abiding person, but I firmly believe that it has got to a stage where enough is enough.

We have only got three means of transportation in Croydon: Dial-a-Ride, a mini van which can only take two wheelchair users, and a Mobility Bus, which goes around Croydon three times a week.

Although Dial-a-Ride is an excellent service, there are not nearly enough vans for all of us who want to use it. I have been on the end of the phone for three-and-a-half hours, then when I finally got through, they could not take me where I wanted to go.

In the past I have written to my MP and even to the Prime Minister, with no result. Now the kid gloves are off and we are not going to give up until we get accessible public transport.

Les Parker  
London SE25

## Rainbow Baby doomed

Whilst I am happy to accept constructive criticism, I found the reviewer of my play, *Rainbow Baby*, (DN September) had either completely misunderstood the aim of the play, or deliberately chosen to twist quotes and ignore positive images to suit her argument.

For example, the words "monster" and "handicapped" and "broken doll" are all spoken by characters who deliberately represent the very ignorance and prejudice which the play is

actually fighting against. They are not the opinion of the playwright, as implied.

The reviewer also carefully refrained from quoting any of the positive or affirming lines in the play. And she totally missed the irony I intended by making the bigoted volunteer patronisingly tell Polly to be "happy, happy, happy."

Underlying the criticism, it appears, is the reviewer's implication that playwrights and actors shouldn't tackle "interesting" (her quote marks) subjects like disability unless they have a disability themselves. By this criterion, *Rainbow Baby* was doomed before the curtain even went up.

I don't believe there should be any no-go areas in the theatre. Yes, there is excellent drama being done by learning impaired people, and such developments are exciting to watch. But surely theatre is big enough for many different approaches to the issue of disability?

Claire Booker  
London SW12

## "Spuppie"

About last month's *SIC* piece on the term for a high-flying person with a disability, SPUPPIE: I'm surprised that anyone is still using spastic as an adjective in this way – it's almost as bad as the now totally discredited use of the word as a noun.

I would like to suggest DUPPIE. A more correct term – YUPPIED (Young Upwardly Mobile Person with a Disability) – has an overtone of being "past it"!

By the way, I suppose I could be called a MUPPIE: Middle Aged Upwardly Mobile Person.

Andy Berry, Milton Keynes



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**sic**

## Flowery language

Times have changed; noticeboards haven't. "Students must be in good health and without physical defect," says a sign at Kew Gardens, advertising their three-year diploma course.

Meanwhile Tony Hall, supervisor of Kew's alpine plants, is giving a lecture in the same building. He's advising employers on positive employment policies towards disabled people, and happens to be deaf.

## Out on a limb?

The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) Man of the Year 1990 award is shared this year by Captain Tim Lancaster of British Airways and his crew for their bravery when he was nearly sucked out of his cockpit. Not much connection with disability though. Unless it's a case of prevention.

## A stair is born

The manager of the London's Cannon Haymarket cinema was recently asked about access for disabled people. He replied: "we don't have any because of the stairs".

## The plane truth

A two-part thriller from the *Sun* newspaper: "Fashion King's Fury at 'cripple' in first class," proclaimed a recent headline, over a story that top clothes designer Karl Lagerfeld had a wheelchair user thrown out of a first class plane cabin because he did not want to travel with her.

And the sequel: "Mr Karl Lagerfeld was not involved in any such incident anywhere at any time, is not being sued as a result thereof and has not even flown the stated route during the last few months."

Is that clear?

## Less mess

Q: When is a bib not a bib?  
A: When it's a tie bib, from America, which looks like a pen until it is clipped to the top of the tie and rolled out. It is also transparent and "allows your fellow diner to enjoy the colour and design of your tie while you enjoy your meal – without worrying about those tell-tale splashes!"

## Out of touch?

An occupational therapist passing the *DN* stand at Naidex was asked what she thought of the newspaper. "I don't read *DN* though the department has it," she said. "I don't look at anything."

**THE SPASTICS SOCIETY  
39TH AGM, LONDON,  
3 NOVEMBER 1990**

Polly Peck chairman Asil Nadir, whose company is in the hands of administrators and who himself faces a bankruptcy petition, has reaffirmed his £5 million pledge to The Spastics Society, chairman Douglas Shapland told the annual general meeting.

A year ago, Asil Nadir announced that his family's Health and Education Foundation would give £5m over 5 years to set up a pioneering centre for the treatment and education of young people with severe learn-

# Asil Nadir reaffirms pledge of £5m

ing difficulties and challenging behaviour.

In a letter to the chairman on 1 November, he talked of the Oak Tree International Project as "very close to my heart" and promised that "God willing, my family and I have every intention of fulfilling our pledges to the Society in respect of that project."

The chairman announced a new partnership "in principle" between The Spastics Society and North Housing Association, one of the largest housing asso-

ciations in England and Wales, to provide community housing for 480 of the Society's clients now in residential centres.

A formal agreement is expected January.

He also announced a new employment strategy, Positive Links, to help meet the needs of disabled people who want to work in the open job market.

The Society has already committed £2.2m to an education plan, approved in May, which aims to provide the most appropriate education for each

child, either through integrated schemes with local authorities or in special schools.

The chairman promised that a survey of the Society's image, including its name, by communication consultants Vallin Polen would be completed over the next 12 months.

In what he summed up as "a highly successful year", the chairman noted the Society's agreement with the International Foundation in Budapest which led to 12 students being sent to the Peto Institute for conductive

education training; Dr Maria Hari's recognition of the Society's educational work; the new regional structure; the launch of the Cerebral Palsy Helpline and a quality assurance policy for Society services "which is leading the field".

He himself wanted priority given to the problems faced by ageing people with cp and carers. He also recognised the difficulties of recruiting younger members to local groups and offered the support of the national Society and group coordinators.

## Hold on to your seats!

"We are in good shape for the rapid changes of the future," Bill Huddleston, hon treasurer, assured the AGM. But he added: "We may have to hold on tight to our seats."

He likened the present situation to riding a rollercoaster, what with external changes, such as the shelving of community care funding, changes in the employment training scheme and a doubling of inflation to 10 per cent, combined with increased aspirations within the Society, like the plans for community care, education, better services with more client involvement.

But he believed the Society had the resources in management and money to cope.

Net fundraising income had increased in 1989-90 by 8.7 per

cent to £43.6m, with "spectacular" achievements from donations, covenants and shops. Assets rose by £0.75m. Only local authority payment for services was disappointing, up just 3.5 per cent to £25.2m.

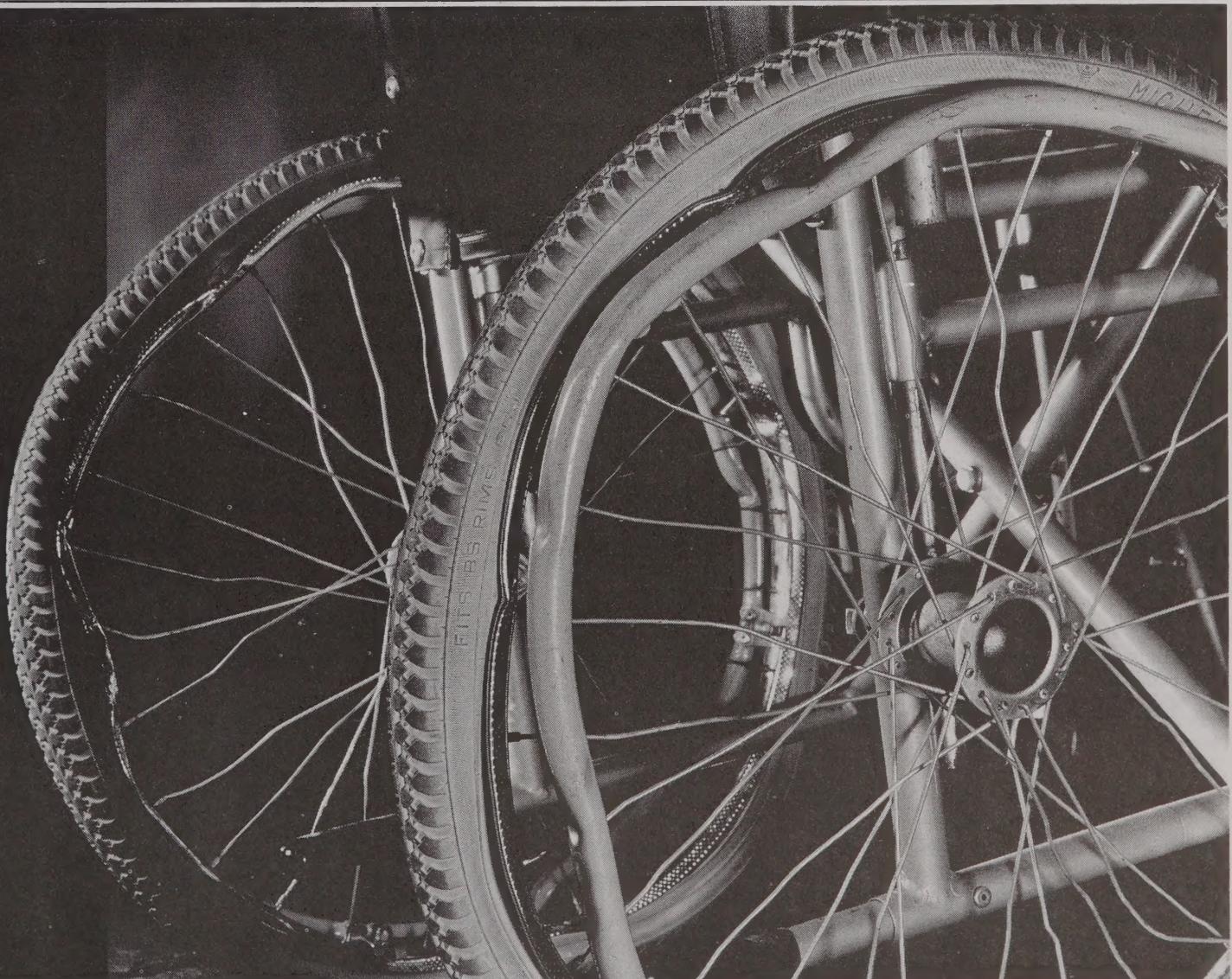


With only six nominations for six places on the Council, Joan Williams joined, from left, David Hendon, Kenneth Coulbeck, Douglas Shapland, Andrew Berry and Bill Huddleston. JACK BLAKE



Sharon Hughes and Linda Baron at the AGM

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or just lend a friendly ear. Please phone the Cerebral Palsy Helpline free on 0800 626 216 between 1pm and 10pm 7 days a week. THERE'S ALWAYS AN ANSWER.





## Danish equipment stands for quality and suitability

By Heather Gordon  
Head Occupational Therapist in overall charge

The general impression of the rehabilitation equipment manufactured in Denmark and supplied by members of the Danish Rehabilitation Group is of quality and suitability for the function for which they have been designed.

The equipment used to assist with treatment is robust, well made and adaptable. Therapists are in danger of losing a unique aspect of their work by not utilising activities and craft as part of the treatment programme. The specifically designed stands and adaptations enable the occupa-

tional therapist to give an acceptable and comprehensive range of activities using the range of skills specifically identified with the profession.

Equipment designed for self care is aesthetically pleasing and functional for any person, and does not look out of place in the home. There are many features that are innovative in design as well as being of help and value to all disabilities and age groups. The use of colour is a useful aid to the visually impaired and an interesting feature of the design. The handrails are robust and pleasant to the touch. The adaptability and special features enable the equipment to be used as part of the assessment of patients in self-care skills and as permanent fixtures to enable the patients to be independent in their own environment.

Designers of equipment show an empathy for the needs and understanding of both the physical and psychological problems experienced by people which is reflected in the range and adaptation of ideas and equipment. The adaptation of a shower curtain fitment to accommodate a track or the shoe patch for the supervision of confused people, illustrate the care and thought given to resolving problems.

The general philosophy that permeates equipment available from Denmark is of maintaining the family unit or enabling the community to encompass those with differing ability. The care, family and people with problems are all considered in a comprehensive overview of the community as a whole.

Denmark in Britain, an export campaign supported by the Danish Export Promotion Council, was established to present a range of Danish goods to British

## Medical profession and industry united on equipment for the handicapped

By Chr. Carstensen  
Chairman, Danish Rehabilitation Group (DRG)

Denmark does not occupy a very large area of the earth's surface and its population is rather less than that of London. Traditionally, Denmark was best known for its farming and significant agricultural exports. Today, however, export sales of industrial goods easily exceed those of food products.

One of the niches in industrial goods is equipment for the elderly and handicapped. The quality requirements for such products are high and smaller Danish companies are particularly well qualified to manufacture them.

The producing companies have, in cooperation with Danish therapists and doctors, developed equipment for the handicapped which achieves high quality and design standards. The Danish social welfare system, in which public institutions authorize and, to a large extent, pay for such equipment has obviously been an important factor in the manufacturing activities which exist in Denmark today.

For one of these manufacturing companies to market its products internationally, for example in the United Kingdom,

can be a costly and difficult process.

In 1981, eight manufacturers of equipment for the handicapped joined together to form the Danish Rehabilitation Group (DRG), whose objective was to develop a high international reputation for the Danish industry. DRG has grown rapidly since then and now has 55 manufacturers in membership. We exhibit jointly at international fairs and many share distributors in various countries.

We work closely with the Danish Ministry for Social Affairs and other public authorities – for example, in the arrangement of seminars both abroad and in Denmark. And when foreign delegations come to Denmark to study our policy in relation to the elderly and handicapped, DRG is involved when the discussion turns to equipment questions.

We are currently cooperating with one local authority in fitting out a day centre and sheltered homes for the elderly with Danish products. DRG is equipping one house associated with the day centre with a full range of products to enable a handicapped person to live an independent, full life. This house can be used by the public

authorities as a test and training facility. And we of course hope that it will receive many British visitors.

During their participation in various exhibitions in the United Kingdom, our manufacturers have had many discussions with buyers and users of their equipment. We have used that experience to change and adjust our products to the needs of the British market. We have always been received very positively and the will to cooperate has been strong. In recent years, our relationships with British distributors has improved greatly. Many of DRG's members have had visits from British distributors and have provided their representatives with product training.

We have been delighted to note a fantastic improvement in the situation of the elderly and handicapped in Britain during the past five years.

Lastly, the Danish Rehabilitation Group would like to take this opportunity to express thanks to our good friends in the United Kingdom. We have always been made to feel very welcome and hope that we will have the opportunity to repay the hospitality we have received.

## Friendly trading with benefits to both sides

By Leslie Mason,  
Nicholls & Clarke Limited

Phlexicare is a range of products marketed by the Nicholls & Clarke Group of Companies, designed to meet the needs of elderly people and those with disabilities in the bathroom and kitchen.

The Pressalit Company is the principal manufacturer in Denmark supplying rehab products as part of the Phlexicare range. The relationship between the two companies was established some eleven years ago when Pressalit introduced their mechanism for providing instant height adjustment for wash basin and kitchen sink assemblies. Such products were totally unknown in the U.K. at that time, but featuring them in the Phlexicare catalogue created a demand which far exceeded the expectations of both companies.

From this encouraging beginning, Pressalit introduced further rehab products, all of which were successfully marketed in the same way by the Nicholls & Clarke Group. This friendly trading relationship has produced benefits to both companies. From time to time Phlexicare have been able to advise on the

suitability of certain products for the U.K. market.

The success of Danish compa-

nies to very high standards of quality and performance. As a result, the products may appear rather costly (by English standards) but when one takes into consideration the durability factor it becomes apparent that they represent good value in the long term. An increasing num-



nies in the U.K. rehab market stems from their ability to innovate products and to produce

ber of specifiers acknowledge this although it is often difficult to obtain the funding required.

# The Disabled in Denmark

## On an equal footing

By Aase Olesen, Minister for Social Affairs

The objective of Danish efforts on behalf of the disabled is that they should all achieve a life which is as close to normal as possible – in their families, in education, at work and in their leisure time, in their homes and through participation in cultural activities.

Thus, the Danish approach to assisting the disabled not only comprises public social policy but also the efforts of society at large to integrate them. Any problems have to be dealt with and solved within the sector concerned.

The basis for the support offered to the handicapped is that each individual must have the



best possible chance to influence his or her life. Disabled persons must be given the opportunity to take an active part, either individually or through their organisations. In this way, both the handicapped themselves and society at large realise that the handicapped possess considerable resources.

Since 1980, it has been the task of the Central Handicap Council to examine and evaluate the conditions of the handicapped and to introduce such measures as may be necessary. The Council has a consultative role in relation to the Minister for Social Affairs and central public authorities with regard to the general aspects of the conditions under which handicapped people live.

Advisory services are offered to the handicapped by municipal authorities, supplemented by special experts employed at county and national levels.

Severely handicapped people are, where necessary, provided with residential care. Every effort is made to give such institutions a homely atmosphere and to keep them on a small scale. However, the trend is towards offering the handicapped the opportunity of establishing their own individual homes or sharing with other handicapped people. In both cases, support is provided.

It is a fundamental aspect of

Danish policy in relation to the disabled that they should receive offers of employment and the opportunity to enjoy leisure activities on an equal footing with other members of the population. Employment facilities in rehabilitation institutions and sheltered workshops, special day-care centres and club activities are available. A survey is also currently being undertaken by the Ministry for Social Affairs into the possibility of recruiting handicapped people to open industry.

In education, both children and adults are offered opportunities either within the normal school system or via remedial education.

In the housing sector, efforts are being made to provide purpose-built private dwellings and to adapt public buildings to the



## Great Britain and Denmark Working together with Care

By John White,  
Managing Director  
Care Management Advisory Service Ltd.

Whenever I return from Denmark I am left with a strong feeling of "Why can't we?"

Why can't we, for example, provide a universal system of care with housing instead of our current arrangement of Sheltered/Warden Controlled housing and Residential Care homes?

Why can't we legislate to ensure that people with special needs, either through age or disability and requiring care, have a minimum allocation of living space that allows them to recreate an environment they can in reality call home, instead of the 'hen hutch' provision we currently provide?

Why can't we convince those providers of care in Great Britain that homes are for living in and not vehicles for "Control by Uniform". Nursing Homes providing long term care are so

often dominated by a Health Service type regime of efficient professional management in sterile environments.

Why can't we reproduce the clear and functional designs of Danish equipment and buildings which somehow manage to, nevertheless, retain a feeling of "normal living".

Why can't we plan the development of our Housing and Care much more in keeping with local requirements and involving the consumer.

There are very few acceptable reasons why such obvious and human solutions cannot be incorporated into our strategic planning of Community Care. Indeed most people I speak to totally endorse this logic.

It is the bureaucratic, ideological and professional attitudes we have created in Great Britain that get so much in the way of progress.

By the end of next year we shall have established in Great Britain our first National Care

Centre in Great Malvern. This will be a home for life for people with very severe mental and physical handicaps. It will also provide a Conference and Study Centre for people involved in the operational management of care.

Danish philosophies and attitudes will feature strongly in the National Care Centre. Negotiations are already under way to provide a permanent Exhibition space within the extensive buildings in conjunction with the Danish Rehabilitation Group, EXSOS and the Ministry for Social Affairs.

The Care Homes will demonstrate Danish Care Practice and it would be my hope that Danish students and other staff will be able to come across on exchange visits to work in the Homes.

The highlight of the initiative however will be the National Conference that we are arranging together next year on the 28th February. Entitled "Great Britain and Denmark". "Working together with Care". This will feature contributions on all of the above issues.

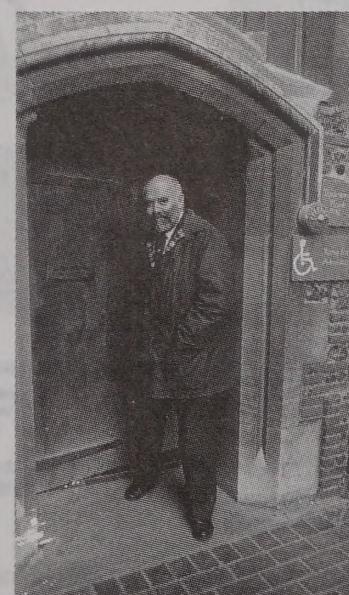
Please book early by contacting Jane Rae on 0989 62630.

## Not only good equipment but dwellings for disabled

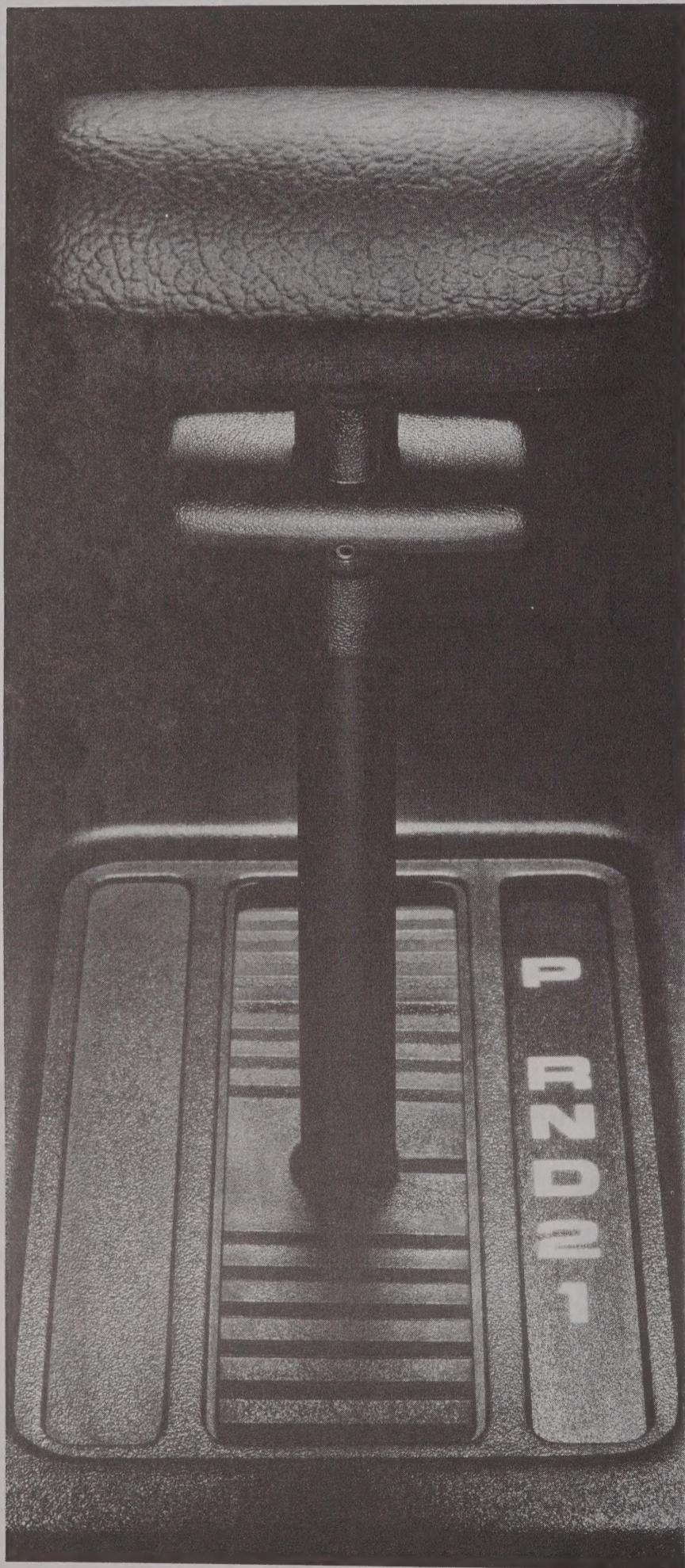
By John Penton  
Chartered Architect

At the end of May this year, a group of ten people from the U.K. were invited by the Royal Danish Embassy to visit Denmark to see some of the current activity there in the field of disability, and in particular to see the 'Cure and Care 1990' Exhibition at Herning in Jutland. With Denmark's long-standing reputation as a caring state, the exhibition at Herning formed a natural focus for the very wide range of products and services available to meet the needs of disabled and elderly people. One of the most interesting exhibits was a show house designed specifically to meet the needs of

wheelchair users, in which many of the products exhibited were brought together and used in a coordinated way. Indeed one of the most impressive achievements of the exhibition was the demonstration that the Danes are currently producing not only a wide range of well-designed equipment from support aids to taps, cleaning equipment to kitchens, but are also now marketing the design and construction of whole facilities from individual dwellings to group homes. With a population one-tenth the size of the U.K. it is an impressive achievement and provides a lesson which both manufacturing industry and the design professions in this country should heed.



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**MOBILITY****Good ideas,  
pity about  
poor access**

says Clare Picking

It was a well attended exhibition with some good new products and the chance to talk and try them out. But a lot still needs to be done for the disabled visitor at Alexandra Palace.

Access is especially difficult. Disabled people reported that there was poor signposting for car drivers approaching from central and south London and once they got there the car parks were a long way from the entrance.

The approach from the back is via the ice rink which is a long push in a manual wheelchair and involves two sets of heavy doors.

In front, there are ramps at each end but no handrails on the four steps. Courtesy buses were setting down people at the foot of a long flight of steps.

Once inside, people complained that the floor was uneven, the toilet facilities inadequate, the eating areas had too little space for wheelchairs, the salad bar was difficult for anyone with hand control problems because there was nowhere to put the tray, and seats just for resting were non-existent.

We know the organisers care – introducing courtesy buses from Euston station was a thoughtful move – but there are plenty of improvements still to be made.

**Powered vehicles**

The Sungift 400 joins the range of class 3 vehicles (which can go up to 8mph and damp down to 4mp for pavement use).

This 4-wheeler dismantles



Comfortable, smooth driving in the Sungift 400.

into six pieces for transportation and can be changed into a 3-wheel scooter (4mph). The seat slides forward and back as well as adjusting in height.

Driving is smooth and the Sungift manages a 5in kerb and 1 in 4 gradient, though I found on

can climb a 3in kerb but is not really suitable for rough ground.

The steering column, which can be pushed forward or back to give extra space, is secured at the base of the column by a small, rather inaccessible lever. Speed and direction control is a single

# naidex'90

**DN's experts report from Alexandra Palace**

Touch-of-the-button Independence Kitchen from Llewellyn Health Care.

GRAHAM BOOL PHOTOGRAPHY

the test slope the delay on the brake was a bit too long. £2,795. *Sungift*, tel: 0234 841334.

The Slipstream buggy, based on a golf buggy, will soon be upgraded to class 3, but is now only 4mph. This 4-wheeler dismantles into seven pieces and climbs 5in kerbs. The brake delay on slopes was also rather long. £1,995. *Electric Leisure*, tel: 0908 211448.

A new scooter from Everest & Jennings Mobility called the Mabilo is a 4mph vehicle which

flat plate on the steering column operated by continuous thumb pressure, which may be difficult for some people. £1,495. Tel: 051 236 6766.

**Powered wheelchairs**

Two new chairs from Everest & Jennings could be useful at work.

The Freedom is a versatile indoor/outdoor chair with a padded seat that can be rotated to

face forwards or backwards; or it can face sideways to be close up to a desk.

The seat can be raised up to 12in and angled up to 15-20 degrees. The backrest angles separately and folds flat for transportation and the armrests can be tipped downwards for desk work. £3,950.

A simpler chair, the High Rider, has a seat which rises to

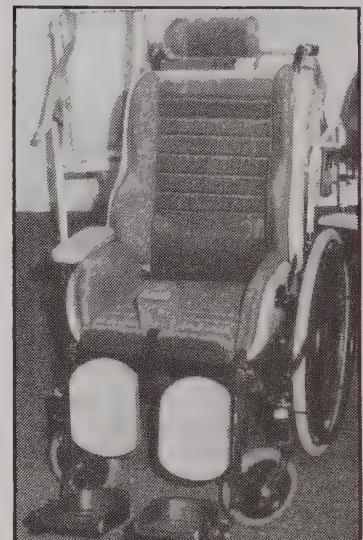
18in and can be driven that way. The backrest is angled and the armrests can angle downwards to approach a desk. £3,795.

The Compact chair comes as an outdoor or indoor chair. Its controls can be programmed for speed only and seemed to operate smoothly. Any seat width is available (cushion not supplied). The rear tyres are composition, so puncture-proof, and the outdoor model climbs 4in kerbs. £1,000. *Remploy*, tel: 0272 277512.

The BEC Sprint for young adults from Sunrise Medical has brightly coloured frames – including fluorescent yellow and pink. The controls can be pre-set or altered for speed and sensitivity. Seat depth and armrest heights are adjustable.

This chair can climb a 5in kerb and has anti-tip wheels at the back. I found it comfortable, but rather jerky to drive, a reflection perhaps of my driving skill! £2,099. Tel: 0384 480 480.

*Continued on page 12*



The cheerful, self-propelling Koala for young adults.

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Here's the Freedom to rotate any way you want.

#### Manual wheelchairs

Remploy has upgraded two chairs and made them more versatile.

The Stowaway can now have self-propelling wheels which do not increase the weight or the overall size when folded. £299.

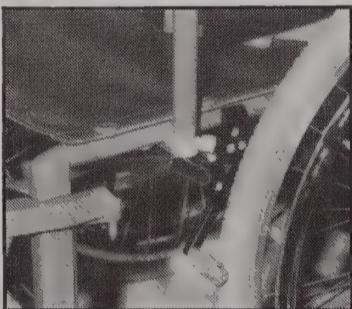
The Roller Super has improved seating, a 2in shorter frame and a backrest which can be turned round to make it more sporty. £585. Tel: 0272 277512.

Poirier's Maxi Roller, designed for people with tetraplegia, has the usual wide range of upholstery colours. The backrest is high at 18in and folds down for transportation. The capstan rims can be altered individually using a special key to change both distance apart and angle. The position of the standard brakes and the method of operation (push

down/pull up) should be helpful too. £890. Tel 0276 28562/3.

From R82 in Denmark comes the Koala self-propelling wheelchair for young adults (the seat is only 14in wide), distributed by Nottingham Rehab.

It is a versatile chair with



Maxi Roller's special key

bright blue removable fabric covered padding at the sides and an adjustable headrest. The whole

chair can be reclined by squeezing handles at the back.

The pads are the only detachable part of the armrests which could create problems with a sideways transfer. £1,400. Tel: 0602 452345.

#### Hoists and lifts

The Wispa portable lift from Chiltern Medical Developments is battery powered (no electrics necessary) and clips onto overhead tracking, so it is useful for homes with tracking in several rooms. It gives 15 lifts on a single charge, can lift up to 20 stones and weighs 17lbs. £720. Tel: 0869 246470.

Chiltern now does a quilted version of the Universal sling for its own hoists, £80.

Access Solutions has developed the Independent sling, £97.50, for the Commodore Major hoist. It is mesh with foam inserts and supports the body under the arms and legs leaving the middle of the body free. Tel: 0264 334434.

Project and Design has introduced a Through Ceiling Lift for seated or standing passengers or wheelchairs.

Built to a fairly simple design, mainly for local authority installation, it is hydraulic and the motor is not above the head. It could suit the smaller home where extra headroom might be needed.

The seat pulls out for transfer, but knee room inside the lift is limited. You open the door by pressing down on the top lightly. £4,515-£4,615. Tel: 0462 750707.

Grorud Bison Bede also has a new vertical lift, the Tirol. Although it is a basic design, it is well finished and looks attractive.

There is a pull-out seat which can be detached for wheelchair



Wispa portable lift

users. The double curved doors give extra knee room. You open the doors by pressing the rubber tubing that runs along the top edges.

The controls are free standing and can be adapted to a range of switches. £3,600-£4,500. Tel: 0207 590149/508308.

#### Walking aid

There's a bright red walking trolley that caught my eye, suitable for people who use a stick, perhaps, but not for those who would lean heavily on it. It has height-adjustable handles and a tray and basket. £39.50. Cefndy Enterprises, tel: 0745 343877.

*Clare Picking is an occupational therapist and deputy editor of the Disabled Living Foundations's Handbook.*



Cantilever clothes rail from the Phlexicare bedroom system. You just pull on a fixed handle.

GRAHAM BOOL PHOTOGRAPHY

#### IN THE HOME

## New designs emphasise "normality"

says Barbara Cullen

Independence and "normality" were themes I was glad to see emphasised at NaideX.

Nicholls and Clarke once again presented a range of equipment for able-bodied and disabled people alike. Their Phlexicare carpet, in eight attractive colourways, resists staining, recovers from heavy duty traffic and, importantly, will not ruck. It was laid over cobblestones on the route of the 1990 London Marathon. £13.50 per square metre and suitable for any room in the home or workplace. Tel: 071 247 5432.

To compliment the carpet, why not consider the Phlexicare Bedroom System? The high level wardrobe can be mounted on to a three drawer unit for added storage space, yet it can be used by a person who is seated or has limited reach.

The innovative cantilever clothes rail pulls down and out in one easy movement with the help of a fixed handle, allowing clothes to be reached safely. Wardrobe and three drawer unit, £626.25.

There is also a wheelchair-accessible dressing table which can be topped with a tilting wall mounted mirror.

People who wake with a stiff neck or shoulders should try the Dunlop Silver Lining Pillow.



Revolutionary Droopsnoot

With an internal air pillow surrounded by fibre filling, it cannot flatten, but makes a cradle around the neck and head and aids restful sleep. I know - I bought one! £19.95. Body Check, tel: 063087 3525.

Among many chairs at NaideX, the Droopsnoot caught my eye.

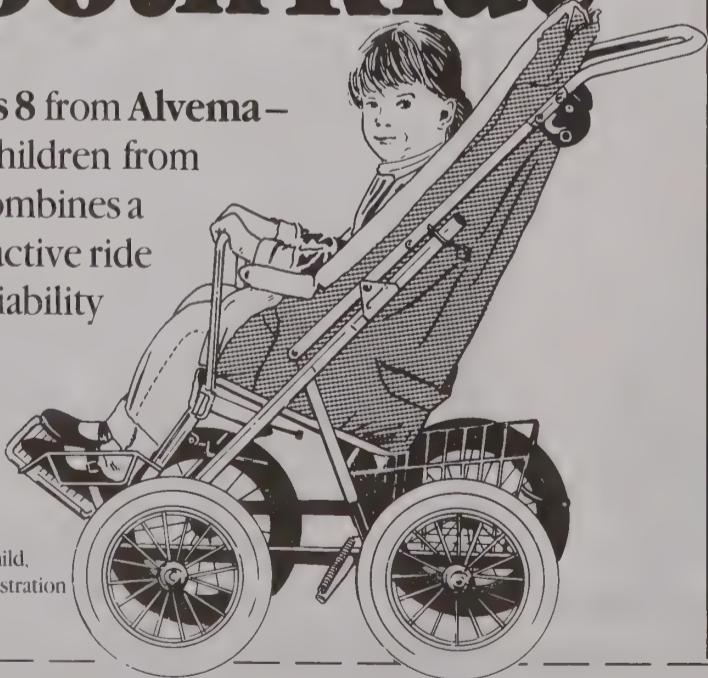
As someone who spends a great deal of time at my desk, and suffers backache afterwards, this chair had appeal. The revolutionary design aligns the spine by retaining the lumbar curve when sitting at the desk, yet can be rocked back to allow a comfortable change of posture.

The pleasing appearance makes the chair acceptable in the home or office. £101 without arms, £122 with, depending on materials. Tel: 0494 471821.

*Continued on page 13*

# Rough Ground-a Smooth Ride

The renowned Series 8 from Alvema – available in sizes for children from 1 to 12 years old. It combines a comfortable and attractive ride for the child with reliability and stability for the parent.



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**CHILDREN**

# Seating, safety – and high prices

says Cathy Love

Multipurpose seating that offers safe transport was an important theme among companies producing products for children at Naidex this autumn.

I was also struck by the steady growth of technology and, less happily, by a matching increase in prices.

The Mobility Aids Centre is among the first to emphasise children's safety during transport. A new style Cruiser buggy includes straps to anchor a child in van or bus. Already crash-tested in the USA, it awaits further tests here. Prices and further information will be available soon. Tel: 0733 44930.

Gimson Healthcare has modified the popular Snug Seat. It looks more like a conventional pushchair now and comes with two machine-washable covers in a choice of two colourways. Lighter, more flexible, with an adjustable backrest to let the child sleep comfortably, it can be freestanding, a pushchair or car seat. There are two sizes: "nursery" up to 40lbs, £369, or "junior" up to 80lbs, £445. Tel:

0533 366779.

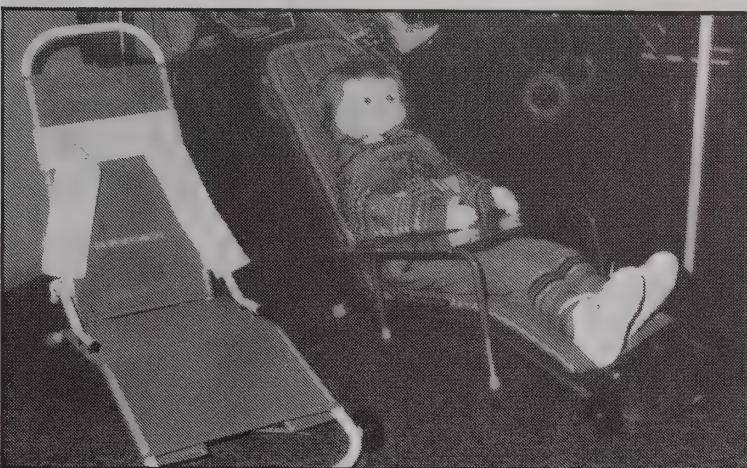
Nottingham Rehab was very willing to demonstrate the R82 Modular Seating System, a smart, comfy seat which offers many support options. It can be mounted on different bases, has a tray, and is undergoing tests as a car seat.

There are three seat sizes, from £175 to £195, which will fit on to a walkabout outdoor frame £299, a reclining height-adjustable indoor frame £349.95, a reclining light indoor frame £180 or a playtime floor frame £125. Tel: 0602 452345.

**Bathtime**

There were disappointingly few bath aids for lifting and supporting children.

Nottingham Rehab showed a wrap-around bath support, fresh from America. It is lightweight, portable, with a yoke that



Bath £770, wash-basin £390, toilet £350, raised seat £40. Tel: 0270 879777.

**Kitchens**

Two exhibitors demonstrated kitchens which are accessible to all people and offer a design service to individual customers and statutory authorities at competitive rates.

Len Softley and Company make individual kitchens to any size and do not have "standard" units. The high quality materials and special features, such as pull-down shelves, allow for a working kitchen for someone who is sitting or standing.

The Saint Roch Kitchen at

changes height at the touch of a button – particularly useful when the kitchen is used by both ambulant and seated people. The Naidex kitchen cost some £4,000. Tel: 051 236 5311.

**Access and security**

Unlocking the front door has always been a problem for people who cannot manage a conventional lock and key.

The Wessex radio controlled door lock system could be the answer. The transmitter, which can be hand-held or mounted to any point on a wheelchair with velcro, does not even have to be pointed at the door to operate. Just lean on the switch mounted on the arm rest, footrest, side of the wheelchair or even the headrest, and the door will either open as you approach or lock behind you.

The device is programmed to open only your door. About £850. Tel: 0794 830303.

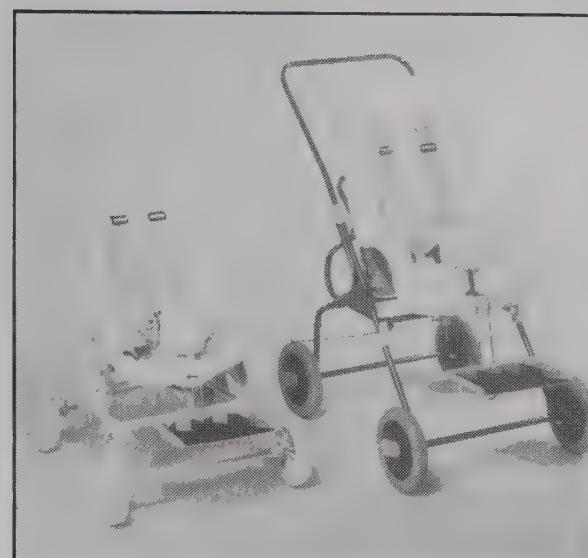
Visibility Threshold is probably the best threshold seal on the market.

Closing the door activates a spring-loaded, hinged, weather bar which is draughtproof. When the door is opened it retracts, leaving a level floor without the usual rubber "bump." £41.42. Albert Marston, tel: 0902 305511.

A major problem of stair lifts has always been the lift track which has to overrun a doorway at the foot of the stairs.

The new Stannah Golden Rail now has a motorised hinged rail which folds at the touch of a button. It costs £850 on top of the standard finish. Tel: 0264 332244.

Barbara Cullen is the advisory occupational therapist for the Northern region of The Spastics Society



Above: Snug Seats look more like conventional pushchairs.

Right: Rifton's adjustable infant front leaning chair from California.

Below: The Alvema 900 bathchair converts quickly to a playchair.



is height-adjustable to give support. £225.

Also new, but not on the stand, was a reclining bathchair in two sizes, £200 and £225.

The Alvema 900 bathchair from Sweden would make bathtime fun. Supportive, lightweight and adjustable, it costs £269, strap £29. A padded insert £79 and perspex cut-out tray £105 quickly convert it to a seat for play.

The Alvema 950 shower/toilet chair, (see DN June) is another versatile piece of equipment, worth looking at, if you can afford it. £535. Rainbow Rehab, tel: 0202 392651.

**Getting mobile**

Rifton's new concept in mobility from California, the mobile prone stander, was launched at Birmingham Naidex (see DN June). Now there are two more pieces of equipment.

The front leaning gait trainer, which supports a child who

can bear weight, comes in two sizes, £395 and £440. The adjustable infant front leaning chair, £196, helps to develop independent head and trunk control and sitting balance. Tel: 0580 880626.

**CE equipment**

Finally, G & S Smirthwaite has extended the range of conductive education equipment by introducing a book rest £32, toy frame £24.50 and grab bars, from £10.

All have a new mechanism which makes them easier to attach to the slatted wooden plinth.

There were also various rounded, suction grab bars, about £11, and one for the bath at £9.50. Tel: 0626 56973.

*Cathy Love is an occupational therapist at The Spastics Society.*

Microtech developments at Naidex will be reviewed by Janet Larcher in DN next month.

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GENTLY.  
ALSO THE  
AUTOMATIC SEAT LIFT  
SLUMBER RECLINER  
FOR COMPLETE REST  
OR PEACEFUL SLEEP.



Stannah's motorised hinged rail has touch-button control.

den from view, ample knee room and lever taps. The shallow front edge makes using the basin easier.

The toilet has an easy grip flush lever and a range of matching seat rings. The cover closes easily over any of them.

Grabrails and accessories in matching shades complete the range.

the exhibition cost about £4,000. Tel: 0604 755621.

Llewellyn Health Care Services exhibited an Independence Kitchen with a range of units to suit every need. The height of cupboards can now be adjusted easily without being taken off the wall.

An exciting feature is the powered adjustable base unit which



Small scooter ideal for small child. Its four wheels make it very stable. Handles 24in high. TFH, tel: 0299 827820.



Take a trip. A Giant sized train, boat, car and lorry make up the Megaplay range from Kirton Products. Measuring 4ft x 2ft 6in. Children will have lots of fun climbing around and exploring the shapes. Ideal for groups. £345 each. Tel: 0440 705352.





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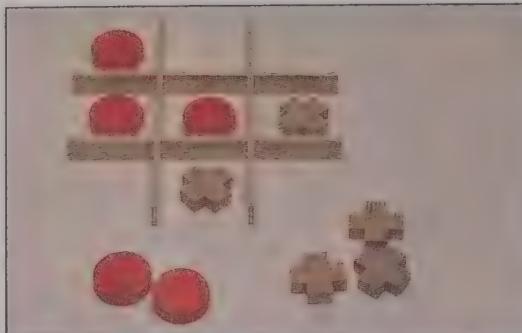
Once the children have tired of tv, why not get them out in the fresh air for a bit of exercise.

Swing ball from Nottingham Rehab is a simple idea but loads of fun. A spiked pole goes into the ground, the ball swings round at the end of the cord, and two players try to hit it. Complete with two bats. £12.85. Tel: 0602 452345.

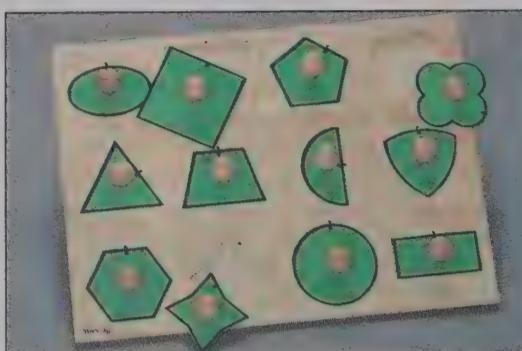


Toys for the Handicapped's (TFH) Loopy is a mobility toy for the child with good arms but weak legs. £77.90. Tel: 0299 827820.

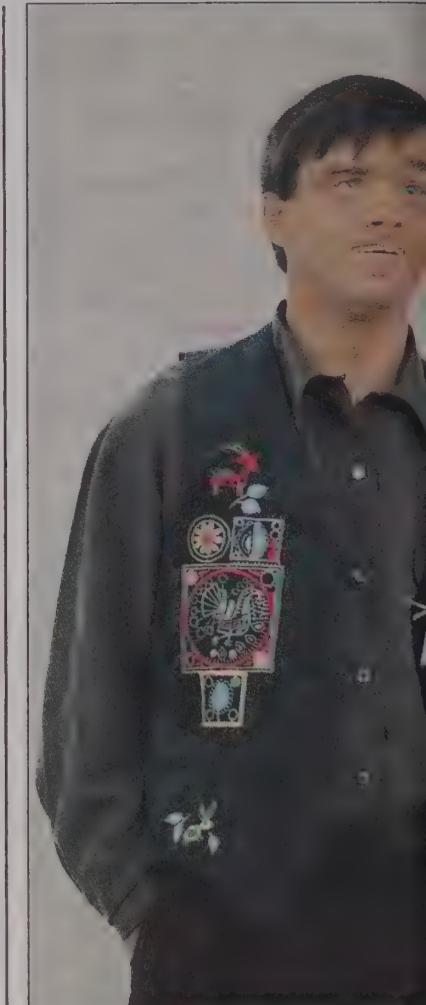
But if Jack Frost is nipping at their toes too much, try some of these other ideas for indoor fun:



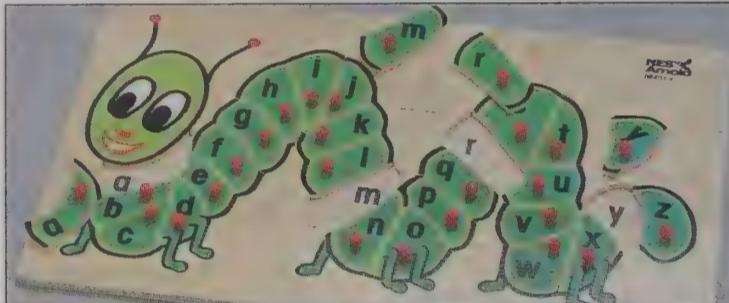
Large game with coloured pieces lets children with severe sight problems play. £3.20. Nottingham Rehab, tel: 0602 452345.



Giant geometric knob puzzle. £19.95. Nottingham Rehab, tel: 0602 452345.



For a skiing holiday (see page 22), cheerfully in a British winter, get this ensemble of anorak, above right, si matching sweatband (part of a hat), pink snood/polo neck warmer, £3.



Say hello to a creepy little green fellow in the Giant Caterpillar Puzzle, with lettered knobs. £14.95. Nottingham Rehab, tel: 0602 452345.



The Koosh Ball is a perennial hit with the kids. It provides good tactile stimulation, can be easily carried, tossed and clutched. 10cm diameter £5.63, Mondo Koosh Ball £8.39. Rompa, tel: 0246 211777.



### Let's Play Together

by Mildred Masheder  
(Greenprint, £4.99 paperback)

Christmas parties should be spiced up by "Tossed frog", "Know your potato" and "Floating ghost", some of the 300 intriguing and boisterous-sounding games in *Let's Play*

### Together.

Each game in the book is coded so you can see at a glance if it is suitable for disabled adults and children.

Many of the games need only some indoor or outdoor space to be a success, and the emphasis is on cooperation rather than competition.

### Signs Make Sense

by Cath Smith  
(Human Horizons Series, paperback, £9.95)

A simple introduction to British Sign Language, this book is useful for people who want a quick grasp of a wide range of



Make a noise!!! Busy band is a one band for children to make their own music. Includes five instruments. £25.90. TFH, tel: 0299 827820.

elementary signs. It groups words according to the part of the body used to express them, making the system easy to remember.

The deaf-blind alphabet and a list of organisations for deaf people are also included.

### You Choose

by the National Deaf Children's Society  
(£4.95, paperback)

The first book in Britain to tackle the safety needs of deaf children, *You Choose* has clear and colourful pictures and sign language diagrams.

Children can use them to



Keep warm and  
catching C&A  
£6, £69.99,  
and shocking  
RAHAM BOOL PHOTOGRAPHY



They're crackers about their party clothes. Sue Pursglove wears a dark red strapless, taffeta ball gown, sizes 8-16, £69.99 from Next Directory. Kevin Holmes goes formal in a dinner jacket, 36in-44in chest, £64, trousers, 28in-38in waist, £35.99, and clip-on bow tie £2.99.



Present giver's special, top: embroidered waistcoat in bottle green moleskin, fully lined, SML, £39.99 over moss green silk shirt, SML, £49.99, both from Next Directory (Freepost 52, Leicester LE5 6ZR, tel: 0345 100 500).

Beautiful two-piece, right, in jade polyester with gold at lapel and waist. 12-16. Top £18.99, skirt £22.99.



Wheelchair users, who want fashion conscious, high quality clothes that won't bunch or gape at the back and can afford to pay a bit more for them, should send for the Rolli Moden catalogue. Look for stone washed jeans, shoes and belts. *Rolli Moden (UK) Ltd, 17 St Lawrence Forstal, Canterbury, Kent CT1 3PA, tel: 0227 765101.*

A second edition of The Special Collection catalogue is now out, and includes disabled model Barbara McDowell. Good for easy-fastening clothes, shoes, lingerie and nightwear. *Mason Williams Freepost MR8421, Manchester M12 6GL. freephone: 0800 262 717.*



Those: a hug from a friend feels nice

identify people and places they feel safe and unsafe with – for example there is a chart showing the difference between "good touches" and "not so good touches."

"The aim of this book is to encourage deaf children to think carefully and make choices in situations which would prove harmful, and to encourage them to seek help quickly," says author Margaret Kennedy.

### Best Foot Forward

by Gordon Phillips  
(Granta Editions, £14.95 inc p&p.  
Available from Blatchfords, Lister Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG22 4AH.)

Think of artificial limbs and chances are the name Blatchfords will spring to mind. But what is or who are Blatchfords and how did they come to achieve this prominence?

In answer to this, Gordon Phillips chronicles the "trials, tribulations and inventiveness" of four generations of the Blatchford family from 1890-1990.

But *Best Foot Forward* is more than a glorified family album (although there are some excellent pictures). By tying the rise of Blatchfords to events such as the First World War, Phillips has produced a lively and

*Continued on page 16*

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Safety first. Britax Cruiser is a car seat for children from six months to six years. £60. Tel: 0273 227227.

If you find cutting bread or meat an awkward chore, Boots' cutting guide and carving knife could slice through the difficulties. The guide holds the food and knife in place while the long bladed knife makes for less effort. £17.50 for the guide, £11.99 for the knife.

After the food comes the drink. Pat Saunders Straws let you suck up liquids and leave the air behind. £2.20 for a pack of two.



Pretty way of getting pressure relief. Seat back and detachable arm rests covered in bright blue, silicon finished cotton (waterproof). £40. Intercare, tel: 0903 713148.

*Continued from page 15*  
interesting read.

Passing through the depression of the 1920s and 30s and the founding of the NHS, the tale ends with the invention of the award winning Endolite limb (*DN*, June).

In sum, *Best Foot Forward* is a good tale of business success, medical history and personal achievement.

### Shadow Over My Brain

by Dr Cecil Todes  
(The Windrush Press, £12.95)

Dr Cecil Todes, a highly qualified child psychiatrist, begins his autobiography with the simple line: "One day my watch stopped..."

After sending the watch back to the manufacturers to no avail, Dr Todes discovered that it had failed because early signs of Parkinson's disease had stopped his arm from swinging rhythmically as it should.

Although the watch stopped,

his life did not. His compelling and highly interesting book is testament to that.

Dr Todes' life story tells of his search into the causes and possible cures for Parkinson's disease.

His clinical background as a psychoanalyst led him to investigate some challenging ideas how childhood trauma might affect Parkinsonians, in his case the premature loss of his mother. This theory, along with countless other trials and new medications, ended in disappointment.

But *Shadow Over My Brain* is certainly not a depressing book. Rather, it is an inspiring and often entertaining story, which takes the reader all the way from London to Vienna, to Spain, to America and finally back to Birmingham for the most revolutionary treatment of all, a foetal cell transplant operation.

The book should not be seen as a passport to a miracle cure. Dr Todes was prepared to take part in drug trials at a very experimental stage and resigned



One in the eye. Autodrop from the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) ensures eye drops hit the mark every time. £1.75 from chemists or from Owen Mumford Ltd, tel: 0993 812021.

why not bring them back with reminiscence videos from Winslow Press. From 1930-1969, there should be a year to suit you. £13.78 each.

If you've had enough at staring at the telly, lie back and relax to four special music tapes called *Touch the Sky, Miracles, Memories and The Healer's Touch*. £28.17 for four. Tel: 0869 244733.

Countrywide Workshops Charitable Trust sell goods made by blind and disabled people. Both children and parents will love the big bag of bricks which comes with its own "tidy away" bag. £26.50 for 100 coloured and shaped bricks.

Make your home seem festive this season with wooden Xmas decorations. £4.25 for a set of 12. Write to or visit the Trust at 47 Fisherton Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 7SU.



himself to the fact that most of them were not for him.

*Shadow Over My Brain* is far more than a medical diary. It is a story which really involves the reader, who is taken, along with Dr Todes and his family, on a rollercoaster of hope and disappointment.

It can be enjoyed by anybody who likes reading autobiographies. Anyone with Parkinson's disease, or who knows someone with the condition, will find it even more interesting and inspiring.

Helen Roberts

### Afters

by Mike Jay  
(Gavarnie Publications, £3.25 from Stephen Fethney, 41 Legion Way,

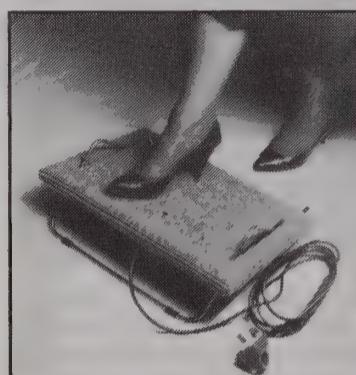


Little softies. For every Mr Snowball sold the RNIB gets 50p. £10.99 at Index shops or £5.99 if you spend £10 or more.

Stocking Fillas, as the name says, make cheap and cheerful stuff. The wrist purse in assorted dayglo colours will keep pocket money safe. 89p each. Beadwork kits let children make their own necklaces and bracelets. £1.95 each. And after the games comes the reading with a bookrest. £1.95. Tel: 0625 511511 for a catalogue.

Sound Advantage can advise on gifts such as tv amplifiers which do not affect the volume of the tv set but can be adjusted to suit the needs of hearing impaired people. From £15-£100. Tel: 0733 361199.

Work off that Xmas dinner with the help of garden tools which snap on to a common handle for use by the standing or seated gardener. Hoe costs £9.10, rake £9.95, Grubber £8.20, Weeder £9.95, Seed Sower £9.10, with handles at £5.95 for 100cm, £7.30 for 130cm and £7.75 for 150cm. Nottingham Rehab, tel: 0602 452345.



Cosy toes. Elderly people or those with poor circulation can get snug cheaply this winter by placing their feet on a Fotsie. £37.90 for the standard model or £48.90 for the executive one. Membrane Heating Systems Limited, tel: 0962 760482.

### GIVE DN FOR A YEAR

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### Able to Garden

edited by Peter Please  
(Batsford, £12.95)

Gardening is one of the most popular pastimes in Britain but many disabled people feel excluded by the technical knowledge needed and the physical skills required.

*Able to Garden* is for beginners but is quite sophisticated in its approach. For example, nesting beside chapters on tools and lawns are ones on controlling pests the organic way and designing a garden for disabled people.

Excellent illustrations and cartoons get the message across easily.

The book is the product of Horticultural Therapy - a charity which advises elderly and disabled gardeners and those who work with them - and its expertise shows in every page.

It is worth a serious browse for would-be gardeners or those who want to inspire others to get the gardening gloves on this Xmas.



Having afters: Mike Jay

"The poems bear witness to a cheerfulness and imagination inspired by his faith," said fellow poet Roger McGough.



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Membership of Response is available to anyone holding a local authority issued parking badge. Parents or Guardians may apply on behalf of anyone under 18 years of age. To join, or for more information, call the free linkline number below. Or write to RAC Response, RAC Motoring Services Ltd, PO Box 700, Spectrum, Bond Street, Bristol BS99 1RB.

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DN12

## THEATRE

### Different Dancers Similar Motion

by The Oxford Dance Residency 1989  
(*Oxford Independent Video, Pegasus Theatre, Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RE, £30 incl p&p*)

This 30 minute videotape is based on two workshops carried out over two weeks by the Oxford dance group Motionhouse.

One group was made up of people with and without physical disabilities, and the other was made up of people with and without learning difficulties.

The groups explored "contact improvisation", a dance form which is fairly new to this country.

Its roots lie in the inter-dependency of partnership, where one person's energy stimulates another's, prompting the two to move within each other's rhythms.

This gives people the chance to explore limitations as well as possibilities, encourages choice and shows how to make the most of minimal movement.

The participants' joy at discovering they could move freely and confidently is incredibly moving and should inspire the dance world to make



Come dancing: the group starts to get to grips with contact improvisation, a new dance form

its work more accessible.

Motionhouse are adamant that contact improvisation is not "therapy." They insist it is designed for people who have traditionally been denied any involvement in mainstream dance.

I would heartily agree with them on this.

My only reservation is that the video looks at how dance affects disabled people without exploring their contribution to the world of dance.

The video is subtitled and very well filmed. Its makers say it is aimed at "anyone involved in delivering and receiving movement, dance or

performance."

If it was up to me, contact improvisation would be made compulsory!

Ashley Grey

For details of other workshops contact Maddie Shepherd at Oxford Independent Video, tel: (0865) 250150.

## FILM

### Beautiful Dreamers (15)

John Kent Harrison's *Beautiful Dreamers* (released in January 91), tells of one man striving to challenge society's ignorance about disability.

Doctor Bucke is the head of an asylum in late 19th Century London, Canada who is appalled at the inhuman methods used to treat mental health patients in

be liberated from the tortuous traditions and behaviour of the past. He replaces medication, restraint and brutal surgery with games and positive encouragement.

The drama culminates in a cricket match between the old guard (church figures, politicians) and a team from the asylum. At stake is the continuing existence of everything the doctor and his new ways have come to represent.

The film has faults. The script is heavy handed, labouring the point at times. There are still jokes which laugh at, rather than



Doctor on call: dispensing therapy in the "surgery"

BLUE DOLPHIN

patriarchal Victorian society.

He is also working towards a greater acceptance of his own disability, having lost the toes on one foot due to frostbite when a child.

Enter Walt Whitman, visionary American poet, and the good doctor learns to implement his belief that his patients must

with, mental health patients. And the film is a touch cute or too softly focussed on occasions, which somewhat blunts its teeth.

On the plus side, there is some finely crafted photography. And the subject of revolutionising attitudes towards mental health is always supportable.

Andy Kimpton-Nye

## TELEVISION

Good motivating material for disabled school leavers could be found on *Lifeschool* (BBC2, 17 Oct), which is aimed at sixth formers.



In the programme *Disability - no problem* Mik Scarlet and other disabled people looked at employment and independent living. The only blemish was that Mik's personal opinion against positive discrimination had no counterbalance.

**Deaf Awareness Week** (29 Oct - 4 Nov) inspired a number of programmes, most notably Channel 4's *Deaf Awareness Day* (30 Oct).

Inevitably, there were inconsistencies. *Tomorrow's World* and *Newsround* (BBC1) each had a single item signed, but everything else remained inaccessible to deaf viewers! Well intentioned, of course, but verging on the tokenistic.

**Same Difference** (C4) showed how would-be employers of deaf people advertise themselves via a telephone number which deaf people can't use!

Ironically, not long afterwards the consumers' programme *Checkout* (C4), having looked at tv gadgetry for deaf people, quoted a number for viewers to ring for a factsheet - but no Minicom line was mentioned.

**A Word in Your Eye** (C4) said that sign language is the first language of most deaf people. If so, how come so few of the programmes during the Day were signed? And for those deaf people whose first language is English, the programmes were only accessible at the extra cost of Teletext.

For me, there were several highlights of the day. *A Word in Your Eye* was based entirely on young deaf people's views. *Comment* featured Sarah Scott and Ray Harrison Graham explaining signed song.

Between programmes there were funny public awareness sketches on sign language and Teletext.

I especially liked the slogan: "sign language - it speaks volumes." And all continuity announcements and trailers were signed by Wendy Ebsworth and Peter Llewellyn-Jones.

Congratulations C4, but if television in general did its job properly, we wouldn't need a Deaf Awareness Day. As a hearing ally, I endorse the call for accessible television for all.

Last month I criticised a play on schizophrenia. The reshowing of "One Flew Over the Cockoo's Nest" (BBC2, 4 Nov) showed me what an object lesson it is in treating both mental distress and institutionalism.

However, in terms of the latter, in January we have *Inmates* to look forward to - a sitcom by our very own Allan Sutherland. I've seen it and, believe me, it's a treat.

Chris Davies

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**EASICARRY**

People keep diaries for all sorts of reasons – some to note future engagements, some to record past events.

Others use them to express their feelings and emotions, their views on life and all its complexities. In Radio 4's "Dear Diary", Simon Brett has been reading extracts from the diaries of people through the ages.

We are always fascinated by other people's lives, but what makes a diary different and of lasting interest to others?

I have recently had several enquiries from people with disabilities about publishing their own personal records.

**I kept a diary of what happened to me and how I felt when I first realised that I was not going to recover fully from my accident.**

I am glad I wrote down my reactions at the time and it is encouraging to read back and realise that I have improved, even if it all seems very slow. Do you think people would be interested in hearing about my story?

I am writing a novel based on my experiences taken from my diaries. I've got a bit stuck and am wondering if an autobiography in which I say who I am would be better. I'm not really sure whether I want other people to know so much about me, but I do enjoy writing it all down. Can you advise me, please?

Many people who face illness and disability are encouraged to record their views and feelings and to try to express how their sufferings and the various treatments affect them. This can be very therapeutic and can help others to understand the situation.

# Share Your Problems

with Margaret Morgan

## Keeping a diary: how it can help you recover



Dr Chris Williams and a team from the Departments of Psychology and Child Health in the Royal Devon and Exeter hospital recently asked 184 people who had head injuries to keep personal diaries for a year. Dr Williams says:

People with head injuries and their families were asked to record for themselves their

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Lin Berwick, DN's telephone counsellor, herself disabled, can give other disabled people and their carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Talk to her on Monday afternoons, 1pm-5pm and Thursdays 6pm-10pm. Her telephone number is (0424) 77582.

This service is sponsored by Kirton Healthcare Group.

experiences of service provision and identify gaps in local support.

The diary method also permitted a contemporary record to be kept of events. We found considerable residual problems even amongst those who were mildly injured and we were

able to use the diary findings for follow-up.

The project also provided a personal contact and continuing relationship with the family and patient. It gave limited support while it lasted and highlighted a gap in service provision which should have provided this support.

As a result of the "Head Injury Diary Project", we have produced an information leaflet for relatives and carers, describing the effects of head injury.

We have also told service planners and providers about the hidden residual problems of people recovering from relatively mild head injuries.

So keeping a diary can be very valuable, not only in therapeutic ways to the person who has had the illness or accident, but also in providing information about needs and services.

But a personal diary has to be rather special to warrant publication. Well-known personalities have a head-start, though even their diaries have to be interesting, concise and well-written. You should have a theme which you can use your diary to illustrate.

I can understand the feelings of my second correspondent in

not wanting to identify herself completely, but it is sometimes the very personal nature of the entries that make people interested and sympathetic.

*Karen's Diary*, mentioned in my October column, is just such a record. Not many wives could express their feelings about their husbands' disabilities as openly and poignantly as Karen Oakley did.

But it is worth asking someone impartial, with experience of writing or publishing, to look at your work.

Even if your work cannot be published, it may be valuable for short articles or for professionals to read.

Real life biographies are always popular though not many people have the skills to write them on their own.

Creative writing classes can be fascinating and many adult education colleges run courses for potential authors.

So do carry on writing or, if you haven't kept a diary before, why not start in 1991?

Happy Christmas!

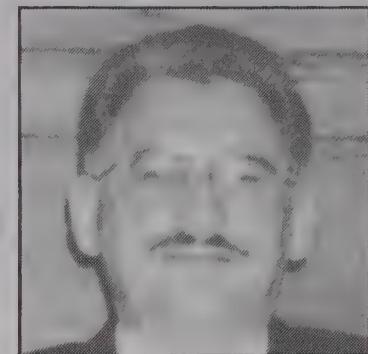
*The Head Injury Project paper was presented at the 5th International Rehabilitation Conference in Dublin in May 1990. Further information from Dr Chris Williams, Director of Psychological Services, District Department of Clinical and Community Psychology, Church Lane, Heavitree, Exeter EX2 5SH.*

*"Karen's Diary"* from Headway, 200 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3HX. £2.50.

*Details of writing courses from your local education department or library.*

If you want to share your problems with Margaret Morgan, write to her c/o DN, address p. 28.

## PROFILE



## Gary Prado

Picture the man in charge of capturing and executing the revolutionary Che Guevara, and chances are you would not come up with Major General Gary Prado. An author and historian, he is not what one might expect a "rough and tough" soldier to be. But then many things about the new 52 year old Bolivian Ambassador to London are paradoxical.

In 1981 a group of guerrillas had captured an American-owned oil installation and were threatening to blow it up if the president didn't resign.

He knew one of the guerrilla leaders so the government sent him in to sort it out: "He surrendered... but then there was a shot and I was wounded in the spinal cord."

After surgery and rehabilitation in the USA he arrived back in Bolivia in a wheelchair. His life did not seem to change: "The army said 'okay, you are now the commander of this division, so take charge.' I had to take the division across country, by plane and by car, inspect the six regiments under me, and move around constantly. I didn't have much time to think about the wheelchair problem."

But General Prado does not have a wholly gung-ho attitude towards disability. In fact, in the "disability awareness" stakes he might even score some points among British radicals.

He was unpleasantly surprised at London's lack of access. On his first weekend here he wanted to take one of his four children around London. "First I had to get permission from someone in the underground to let me in. Then I had to get down with the help of two people."

He remains a staunch opponent of segregation: "The worst thing you can do for a disabled person is to segregate them."

But despite this awareness, he maintains the soldier's "stiff upper lip" attitude to life. When he went to meet the Queen he couldn't travel in the usual carriage and allowed himself to be carried up the stairs into the palace. Similarly, his embassy has four steps in front which he has to be lifted up but he won't fit a ramp. While these embarrassments may anger some, he remains unconcerned: "I don't think of myself as a disabled person. I don't know if that's right or wrong. I just do whatever I have to do."

Alison Rowat

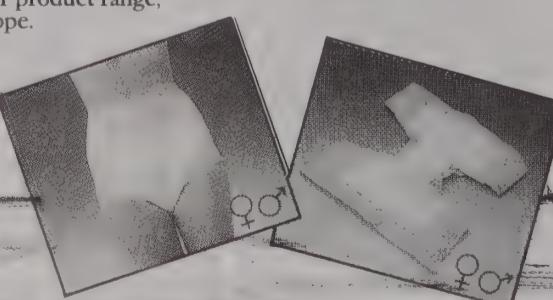
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The Arthrogryposis Group is a national support group for adults and families with children born with Arthrogryposis Multiplex Congenita (Amyoplasia). More information from Diana Piercy, 1 The Oaks, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4SW, tel: (0747) 822655.

**Managing Other People's Money.** £5.95 from Age Concern England, Astral House 1268 London Road, London SW16 4ER or from major branches of WH Smith and good bookshops.

The Lees Stable Cycle Centre is a cycle hire, information and advice service in the Borders which specialises in cycling for people with disabilities. The Lees Stables, Coldstream, Berwickshire TD12 4NN, tel: (0890) 2709.

**The Rod Surrage Appeal Fund** is an independent self-drive transport service for disabled people. More details from Trevor Pollitt, The RSAF, 1 Johnston Green, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6XS, tel: (0483) 233640.

Disabled people interested in ski-ing holidays or any one who wants to go as a helper should



contact The Uphill Ski Club, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N, tel: 071-636 1989.

**Where Can You Go Today?** a guide published by the Disab-lement Resource Unit in Liverpool for disabled tourists exploring Merseyside. Send cheques for £5.95 (plus 70 pence p&p) payable to MCVS, to the Disab-lement Resource Unit, Mount Vernon Green, Hall Lane, Liverpool L7 8TF.

**Healthwise** has a new catalogue of books on health, sex and relationships. Available free with an A5 SAE from Healthwise, the FPA bookshop, 27-35 Mortimer St., London W1N 7RJ.

**Parking in Central London** for orange badge holders is a new leaflet from The Joint Committee on Mobility for Disabled People. The leaflet is free with an SAE from the Joint Committee on Mobility, 9 Moss Close, Pin-ner HA5 5AY.

**In Touch**, the BBC radio programme, has produced a guide to sources of information and entertainment available to visually impaired people (see *Using a Talking Book Machine* below). Plea-sures of Listening costs £1.75 and is available on tape and in large print and braille. Cheques payable to Broadcasting Support Services should be sent to Plea-sures of Listening, BSS, 252 Western Avenue, London W3 6XJ.



**Your Benefit** is a new social security benefit pamphlet from the Royal National Institute for the Blind. Available in Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Yoruba and in English in large print, tape, braille and Moon. Cost £1 for individuals, £2.50 for organisations from the Benefits Rights Office, Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, Lon-don W1N 6AA, tel: 071-388 1266 ext 2335.

#### MOVES

Andrea Leonard has been appointed manager of NAHAT NHS Trusts Standing Committee. Douglas Campbell is the new national chairman of the Disabled Drivers' Association. John Tierney is now head of the Africa section of the Overseas Division of Help the Aged. Mary White is the new national con-tinence adviser for ASBAH.

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# Love beats sandwiches

Barbara Buist tells of the brawler who enriches their lives

A few years ago I had to give up nursing because of a disabling spinal problem. Around that time we found ourselves dog-less.

Being animal lovers, my husband and I have always shared our home with various cats and dogs, but now we needed a special dog. A labrador or retriever probably springs to mind as an ideal gentle and obedient dog, but this time I fancied something a bit different.

David gave me a book crammed full of dogs in every shape and size. Finally, in "all innocence" I chose an Airedale terrier.

We found some puppies for sale and went to have a look at them. It was impossible to miss the bossy-boots of the litter. She had bagged the squeaky boot, which was meant to be a shared toy.

Then she made a bee line for my husband, looking up at him with mischievous eyes whilst chewing his shoe laces.

Of course David melted, having read somewhere that you should have the puppy that chooses you.

My heart sank to my boots because I had read somewhere never pick the dominant or largest one (she was both).

But in the end we came home with bossy-boots and named her Trixie.

When she was small, Trixie looked like a fluffy teddy bear and one simply itched to cuddle her, but she would become all teeth and claws, wanting to turn it into a rough game.

Typically, it was after having her for some time that we saw a book called *Delinquent Dogs*. Under Airedale it said:

delinquency rating – high – a born brawler.

Many a time we have been out with Trixie and complete strangers have come up to say hello and gone on to say "We had an Airedale once." Strange how only one of them ever repeated the experience.

If they have a dog with them, Trixie lets them come really close then lunges forward at the last second, scaring both dog and owner. We then spend time swapping horror stories.

Many a fellow sufferer (sorry, owner) has shared the experience of the breed's awful habit of sticking their heads up ladies skirts.

Our local vet asked if we would mind a family coming to see Trixie. One of their children had an allergy to fur and they were looking at dogs that did not moult.

The parents arrived with two sweet little girls. We decided it would be only fair for them to see how playful these terriers can be,

so after a while we let the fang loose.

The youngest child "cracked" after about two minutes and was taken screaming to the car. We apologised profusely – after all, we are responsible people and felt upset at her fright.

Whilst we were talking, the other little girl in summer dress and white ankle socks waited to see the end of the floor show.

By now Trixie had quietened down somewhat. She took a large slurp of water from her bowl, slowly lifting her head to show us her dripping wet beard. Then, quick as a flash, she shot her head straight up the child's skirt and on to her bare legs.

The mother thanked us and in a voice that trembled somewhat said they would not be having an Airedale.

A couple of years later, my husband was seeing a client in his office. After the interview the lady said: "You don't remember me do you? We came to see your Airedale. We have one ourselves now and it's probably worse than yours, but the children love him!"

The breed just gets under one's skin. Trixie can be utterly impossible, but we love her dearly. She is amazingly adaptable, happy to go for long walks with David or lie at my feet while I write. She is superb



Trixie and owner – pause before the next lunge?

company and her presence has enriched our lives.

Last year I had to have three major back operations which left me with chronic pain, unable to walk more than a hundred yards.

Not being content with that, I contracted Acute Guillain Barre syndrome, a rare virus that can be rather difficult to diagnose. I ended up totally paralysed and unable to speak. It was rather horrific because I was fully conscious but unable to communicate.

Eventually I was rushed into intensive care, put on a ventilator and given a tracheotomy.

Over nine weeks I recovered slowly to the point where I was unable to feel my legs but, with lots of determination, could walk a little on crutches.

All I wanted now was to get home to David. I had thought, too, quite a lot about the cats.

But I couldn't wait to see Trixie – not least because it was she who lay beside my bed the whole afternoon before I was rushed to hospital.

She would not leave me, not even to pinch some chicken sandwiches that were easily within her reach.

That's puppy love for you.

## Make the most out of life

The Ultralight Express Wheelchair is propelled easily and effortlessly, only 24 lbs in weight. It folds up to a compact 11 inches for easy storage or transport. Designed for comfort it can be adjusted to match individual needs. The Express, made from aircraft aluminium, is built to last.

It gives maximum stability to go where you want. The Express Wheelchair lets you get the most out of life.

Hemiplegic models now available.

We care  
more

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ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Ortho Kinetics (UK) Ltd, Wednesfield,  
Wolverhampton WV13 3AX. Tel: 0902 866166

DN12

SDN



## WHAT'S ON

**Basic Counselling Skills.** £50. 3-4 December at St Joseph's Pastoral Office, The Burroughs, Hendon, London NW4 4TY, tel: 081-202 3999. More details are available from Teresa Phillips at the above address.

**Stanley Segal Lecture.** Sir Brian Rix on The History of Mental Handicap and the Development of Mencap. 8 pm, 4 December at the Education Lecture Theatre, School of Education, University of Nottingham. For details contact Dr Brenda Lawrence (0602) 484848 ext 2292.

**Introduction to Visual Disability.** £55. 5 December in Birmingham. Further details from The Principal, RNIB National Mobility Centre, 1 The Square, 111 Broad Street, Birmingham B15 1AS, tel: 021-643 9912.

**Sexuality and Disability:** an introduction for trained counsellors. £30. 13 December at SPOD, 286 Camden Road, London N7 0BJ, tel: 071-607 8851.

**Disability in the Developing World.** 10-14 December at the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists, London. £265 (concessions may be available). More details from M. Greenhalgh, Administrator, IDEA, William House, 101 Eden Vale Road, Westbury, Wiltshire B13 3QF, tel: (0373) 827635.

**The British Psychological Society Conference.** 17/18 December at City University, London. Members £31, non-members £41, concessions £16 for two days. Contact the Conference Organiser, The BPS, St Andrews House, 48 Princess Road East, Leicester LE1 7DR, tel: (0533) 549568.

**Sports and Leisure facilities for children with special needs – an information day.** £2.50. 16 January. For details and application forms tel: Janet Badcock, Guy's Hospital, 071-955 5000 ext 3878.

## Castle Priory

**The Young Child with a Visual Disability.** £189. 2-4 January.

**Sport and Recreational Activities – involving people with severe learning and physical disabilities.** £189. 3-6 January.

**Clumsiness in Children.** £169. 18-20 January.

**Non residence charges available on application. Further information from Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 0HE (enclose SAE), tel: (0491) 37551.**

## CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1. CHAD (Church Action on Disability) 3. Decent 7. Inter Milan 9. News 11. Danes 12. Kissed 13. Enabler 14. Very 16. Earn 18. Pringle 21. SOS 22. Belts 23. Totter 24. Eerie

DOWN: 1. Child benefit 2. Antenna 3. Drinker 4. Clans 5. Tuesday 6. Gristle 8. Nest eggs 10. We 15. Piste 17. Raft 18. Peer 19. Nose 20. Elle

## HELP

The British Association of the Hard of Hearing (BAHOH) is looking for experienced hearing aid users willing to help newcomers adjust to aids. BAHOH say up to 40 per cent of aids are discarded before being given a chance to work. The next volunteer training course will be in Leeds on February 22-24. For details contact Stephen Lloyd, tel: 081-743 1110.

Chatback is a free electronic mail facility which enables children with speech difficulties to communicate. They currently have a waiting list and need funds to expand the service. To contribute contact Chatback, 115 New Cavendish Street, London, W1M 8JS, tel: 071-323 0017.

## Sold Out!

Thanks to every one who bought the *Disability Now* 1990 Christmas card. It was painted by the disabled artist Peter Farrell, runner up in last year's *DN* competition. The cards were so popular we sold out in just six weeks! People from all around the country have bought them and we even have 25 packs on their way to Moscow!

Mr A Adetona, the former National Publicity Secretary for the National Advisory Council for the Deaf in Nigeria, is now trying to set up a newspaper called *The Voiceless* for disabled people in his country and needs £75,000. Any offers of help should be sent to Mr Adetona, 17 Palm Church Street, P.O. Box 6924, G.P.O. Marina, Lagos, Nigeria.

How about an exemption Dog Show to raise funds? If you are a community group then Preston Keeling could help you out. He is a regular exhibitor of dogs and is offering his services as a judge free of charge. Tel: (0707) 376558.

Organisations or individuals interested in a campaign to persuade manufacturers to make buses accessible should contact Vicky Waddington, Dial-a-Ride Users Association, St Margaret's, 25 Leighton Road, London NW5, tel: 071-482 2325.

## CLASSIFIED

Kent Coast, Large hotel overlooking the Sea. Suitable for Active Elderly and Disabled. Special Readers "Disability Now" Offer – Groups 30+. Any 5 nights between Nov '90 and 15 Dec '90 £99.00 per person sharing, half board. Xmas £250.00 p.p. per week, full board. New Year £195.00 p.p. per week, full board. Jan/Feb '91 5 nights £99.00 p.p. Groups 30+. Video showing of hotel can be arranged. All rooms/chalets en-suite, TV, Tea, Telephone, Transport arranged at extra cost. Ring, write for info pack. Viking Hotel, Sandwich Road, Pegwell Bay, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 5HZ Tel No: 0843 595823.

## CENTRAL EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

## DIRECTORATE OF MANAGEMENT AND PERSONNEL

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES DIVISION

## PERSONNEL ASSISTANT

£9,795-£10,950

We work as a team and your primary role will be to provide administration and support for the Equal Opportunities Division.

You will be required to maintain resources, deal with enquiries from a wide range of people, compile and evaluate employment statistics, and offer advice on the City Council's Equal Opportunities policy and associated initiatives.

You should be able to recognise discrimination and have an awareness of anti-discriminatory legislation coupled with clerical experience and organisational ability.

**Application forms (returnable by 21 December, 1990) and further details available from: The Personnel Section, Central Executive Department, Council House, Birmingham, B1 1BB. Telephone 021 235 2187 (24 hour service).**

Please quote Ref 30/238.



Birmingham City Council

The City Council welcomes applications from all sections of the community, irrespective of race, colour, gender, sexuality or disability. Job sharers welcome, no partner necessary

## TRIPLE OAK KNITTING SERVICE

Top Quality Yarns, Knit Kits and Accessories available by post.

Send S.A.E. for illustrated brochure.

Triple Oak (Ref. D.N.), The Croft, Stockwood Nr. Redditch B96 6SX or Ring 0386 793115

# AT LAST MOBILITY MADE SIMPLE!

Technological advancement ensures improvement in care and comfort, well, we at Universal have considered your needs and ensured that our experience and knowledge based on personal disability have advanced to provide you with quality workmanship and value for money... So before you decide on your vehicle talk to us.

- Top Quality at Competitive Prices
- Improved Vision from your Wheelchair
- Your requirements catered for
- Reliability of service
- Hand Controls, Swivel Seats & Rear Hoists supplied & fitted
- Second hand vehicle conversions available (price on request)

**FREE HOME DEMO**

**PRICES FROM £7595**

**UNIVERSAL Mobility**

**Head Office: Jordans, Partridge Lane, Ruspur, Sussex RH12 4RW  
Tel. No: 0293 871019 · Fax No: 0293 871007**

**Works & Northern Office: 7 Henry Street, Batley Carr, Batley, West Yorkshire WF17 6JJ  
Tel. No: 0924 451971 · Fax No: 0924 452031**

**British Quality Assured**

**FOR SALE**

**BEC SCOOTER** battery powered chair with charger and front basket. Will fold into car boot. 1983 model. Offers. Tel: (0905) 353868 (Worcester - could deliver to London area).

**ELSWICK ENVOY**, driven from wheelchair. Full right hand controls. 10,000 miles. Very reliable. £3,500. More details, tel: (0243) 826096.

**BEC 3 WHEELED** electric scooter. £695. Tel: (0203) 366261 (near Coventry).

**3 BEDROOM** semi-detached house. Fully adapted for disabled people. Reserved parking. Lounge, newly fitted kitchen, bathroom and toilet and separate wc. Full gas central heating. Wessex wheelchair lift from front room floor to major bedroom. Erith, Kent, near all amenities. Must be viewed to be appreciated. £74,000 ono. Tel: Dartford (0322) 348575.

**OPAL MANTA gt.** White sports car, hatchback automatic B reg. Bekker hand controls. Low mileage. £2,750. Tel: (0332) 516662 after 6 pm (Derby).

**F REG SUZUKI** high top van (super carry). Excellent condition, 12,000 miles only, seats four, plus person in wheelchair. Ramps, clamps, windows all round. View anytime. £5,250. Tel: (0422) 345330 (Halifax).

**ESCORT CHAIRMAN 1.3**, B reg (85). 21,000 miles. Excellent condition. £3,500. Tel: (0732) 351985 (Kent).

**CARTERS CRUISER** electric power wheelchair with kerb riders. Excellent condition. Virtually unused. £1,100 ono. Tel: (0742) 324094 (Sheffield).

**BATTERY CAR AND STAIRLIFT**. Both new August '90. Battery car 24 v deluxe aire with cabin cost £3,504. Sell £2,000. Stairlift 12/13 stairs. Cost £1,574. Sell £750. Terms possible. Tel: (0625) 533867.

**VAUXHAL ASTRA** 1.3, 3 door hatch, blue, A registered with power assisted steering by Steering Developments, hand controls. Special disabled driving seat. Long MOT, very low mileage. Price £2,750 ono. Tel: (0279) 430732 (Harlow).

**ELVA DELUXE** three wheel electric leisure vehicle. 3 years old, hardly used. £800. Tel: (0252) 8350777 (office hours) or (0276) 23339 (evenings), Surrey.

**BATRICAR** as new. Complete with all weather hood. Fully insured. £1,500 ono. Tel: 081-446 8626.

**A HOBBY AS WELL AS EXTRA INCOME**  
How would you like to learn about health and nutrition and then become a consultant. This is open to men and women, able or disabled. Work your own hours. A good opportunity not to be missed.  
Call Ann, 0323 31520 Anytime.

**CENTRAL MOBILITY**

Nearly new, battery cars, scooters and electric wheelchairs, bought and sold throughout the country.

For further information and advice contact us anytime on

**021 366 6796** 

**GBL SERVICES**  
**MANUAL LIGHT WEIGHT WHEELCHAIRS**

(New & Secondhand [All Types])

- Bought and Sold
- Repairs, Services and Alterations
- Parts Supplied ... Fitting Available
- Hiring Service Available
- Wheelchair Skills Coached

Advice and Alternative Enquiries  
Welcome Contact: Jamie:  
100 Midsummer Avenue,  
Hounslow, London TW4 5BB  
Tel: 081-742 1620

**GOWRINGS CHAIRMAN**, Escort van with ramp for wheelchair bound passenger. C reg. 26,000 miles, MOTed. £7,500 ono. Tel: (0784) 434905 or (0753) 868181 ext 2268.

**ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIRS**, scooters, battery cars. All makes, models wanted and for sale. Nearly new, hardly used from half price. Demonstrations and collections. Free advice. All areas. Contact Mr Gibbons. Tel: 021-357 4965 anytime.

**NIAGARA MASSAGE PADS**, hand units, Adjustamatic massage beds, reclining massage chairs, nearly new, half prices, reconditioned, year warranty, guaranteed first class goods, part exchanges, repairs, COD, Access, Visa accepted. Tel: (0460) 61157.

**JIGSAWS BY MAIL ORDER** Choose from over 300 jigsaws inc. Waddingtons, Mandolin Heye. For free catalogue write to The Jigsaws Connection, 1 Main Road, Grindleyford, Sheffield S30 1HN, tel: (0433) 30121.

**PORTABLE OXYGEN** cylinder with carrying case and mask. Only used once - excellent condition. Tel: (0225) 764859.

**VITESSE 2 SPEED** outdoor/indoor chair (with charger) and 2 new batteries. £450 ono. Tel: (0462) 678944 after 7pm (Herts).

**ALVA DELUXE** electric tricycle. 12 in wheel excellent condition. Approx 2 years old. Cost £1,300 new. Offers. Tel: (0642) 246445. Middlesbrough, Cleveland - can deliver in area.

**CHAIR-MATES** take the getting up out of sitting down by adding eight pockets to armchairs, sofas, divans, beds etc and help users and carers alike. New range of colours. Ideal Xmas present. Details from manufacturers: PMP, Hillfoot, Glencarre, Perth PH2 7LE, tel: (0738) 86329.

**FORD ESCORT CHAIRMAN** A reg., 57,000 miles. £1,500 ono. Tel: 071-354 3156.

**ELAP SWIVEL SEAT** for a Maestro, driver or passenger side. £175 ono. Tel: (0249) 75463 or (0380) 722276.

**MEYRE ELECTRICALLY** operated outdoor wheelchair, joystick control. New batteries and tyres, width 27 inches. £300 ono. Tel: (0376) 516162.

**WILHELM MEYER** electric wheelchair. £400 ono. Tel: (0282) 843555.

**ORTHO KINETIC** electric lifting chair. VGC. £275 ono. Tel: (0634) 666408 Chatham, Kent.

**HAVE YOU BEEN YET?** The new Keep Able Store has hundreds of products to try out, all under one roof. Wheelchairs, scooters, high seat chairs, and much more. Free advice from therapists. Visit soon. Keep Able, Capital Interchange Way, Brentford, tel: 081-742 2181.

**ALVEMA 110 PUSHCHAIR**. Suit 5-10 years. Complete with grip rail, tray, bag and thermal foot muff. Used for only 9 months, very good condition. £300. For more details, tel: 081-441 3714 (Mrs Lowe).

**LOSE WEIGHT** and earn money with great product now on television. Call Karen: 091-222 1929.

**SET UP AND OPERATE** your own home based travel agency and tour operation. For full details send SAE to Sean O'Shea, 28 Standmore Road, Whitefield, Manchester M25 7PN.

**VESSA VENTURA** scooter. 4 years old. Good condition. Needs new batteries hence low price of £250. Tel: (0728) 831752.

**STANNAH SILVER RAIL**. Stairlift with swivel seat. Only used eleven months. VGC. £600 ono. Tel: (0707) 322836.

**WANTED**

**HAND CONTROLLED** automatic car. Able to be driven from a wheelchair up to £3,000 approx. Tel: (0705) 698962 (evenings).

**LEVO STAND UP** electric wheelchair in good condition. Stapleton, tel: (060545) 664 (Norfolk).

**YOUNG PERSON** wanted to do odd jobs for disabled lady, willing to pay small fee for this service. London. Box No. C1.

**WANTED URGENTLY** for new project, calipers - all sizes and types, even broken or scrap parts. Box No. C2.

**NATURAL THERAPY**

**THERAPEUTIC MASSAGE**, aromatherapy and reflexology. For free initial consultation, phone: 081-203 6944 (London).

**Disability Now** is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertisers before relying on them.

**HOUSING****MAINTENANCE OFFICER**

to £20,169 pa

**Do you have:**

- A sound knowledge of building construction and maintenance techniques
- The ability to prepare plans and specifications for small works
- Experience of supervising staff and contractors
- Suitable qualifications (e.g. H.N.C. Building), which would be an advantage
- Good communication skills.

If so, we require a responsible person to help provide an effective quality service as part of our Building Maintenance Section.

Applications from disabled people, women and ethnic minorities would be welcomed as they are under-represented in this area.

Please quote Ref: 0-293-90.

For further details and an application form please apply to the Director of Personnel, Town Hall, Watford, Herts., WD1 3EX. Tel: Watford (0923) 240175 (24 hour ansaphone service). Closing date: 30th November 1990.

Watford Borough Council is working towards becoming an Equal Opportunities Employer and does not discriminate on the grounds of gender, ethnic origin, disability or sexual orientation. Watford is a multi racial area and we would like to see this reflected in our work force. We welcome applications from women, members of the black and ethnic communities and people with disabilities, irrespective of age. Job sharers welcome, with or without a job share partner, unless otherwise stated.

**BOROUGH OF WATFORD**

**SEND US YOUR SMALLS...**

...and make a big impression. Small ads in DN reach over 80,000 people for just £3 a line (minimum £9). Please don't send money with your ad - we will invoice you after it goes in. For Find a Friend please send £3 cheque or postal order payable to Disability Now with your ad. Phone 071-636 5020 ext 245.

**HOLIDAYS**

Will access be easy? Are the rooms big enough? Is there a lift? For a trouble-free holiday with all the family try

**ASHWELLTHORPE HALL HOTEL**

HOTEL, a discreetly adapted manor house set in acres of beautiful grounds. 22 bedrooms - centrally heated throughout, licensed bars, free use of wheelchairs and other aids, mini-bus, half or full board. Telephone: (050841) 324 ... or write: the Manager, Ashwellthorpe Hall Hotel, Ashwellthorpe, Norwich NR16 1EX.

**BRITTANY COTTAGE** to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details C Hodgson. Tel: (0924) 454300.

**WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE** holiday bungalows. Two luxury bungalows, purpose built to accommodate wheelchairs, with stunning country views, 1.5 miles from beautiful beaches. Fully equipped fitted kitchen with washing machine, tumble dryer, grill, built-in oven, microwave, hob, fridge. Large bathroom with handrails and special showerchair, three large bedrooms (bedblocks and monkey-pole available) sleeping up to six people. We have the "Tourism for All" symbol. For brochure: Hen Ysgol Holiday Homes, Rhoscolyn, Isle of Anglesey, LL65 2RQ, tel: (0407) 741593.

**MAR Y SOL**, Los Cristianos, Tenerife. Wheelchair accessible apartment and studios to rent or buy in luxury complex. Heated pool with hoist, restaurant, health treatments. Video available. Cheap flights. Sue Abbott, 123 Coppermill

From the January 1991 issue lineage ads will be reserved for private individuals at their home address and for charities. Business ads will appear in a boxed form. To place a boxed ad, contact our Advertisement Manager, Don Neal on 071-252 1362.

Road, Wraysbury, Staines, Middx TW19 5NX, tel: (0753) 685718.

Try a **WINGED FELLOWSHIP** holiday in Britain or Overseas. Great fun and full care provided. Write for free colour brochure. Winged Fellowship, Angel House, 20/32 Penotonville Road, London N1 9XD, tel: 071-833 2594.

**SUNNY TENERIFE**, Los Christianos. As featured on tv and radio, the beautiful "Mar y Sol" Health and Fitness Resort. Purpose-built, totally wheelchair-accessible. Swimming pools, saunas, gymnasium, physiotherapy. Apartments for rent or ownership. I can arrange your flights too! "Brilliant ... Amazing!" says BBC tv's *The Travel Show*. Come, see for yourself! Specially adapted taxi service from Tenerife airport. Video (£15 refundable deposit), brochure: Lynne James, 7 Overpool Road, Ellesmere Port L66 1JW, tel: 051-339 5316.

**NORTH DEVON**, self catering cottages sleeping 4/6 (2 specially designed for wheelchairs) fully equipped and heated - linen provided. Peaceful country setting for touring Exmoor, Dartmoor and Devon coast. Brochure from South Coombe Farm, Witheridge, Tiverton, Devon EX16 8QL, tel: (0884) 860302.

**DEVELOPMENT WORKER**

*The London Disability Arts Forum, The leading arts organisation of disabled people, is looking for a disabled person to take on its development worker role. The candidate must be a motivated and creative person with good organising skills and a commitment to Disability arts and culture. S/he will be responsible for the overall running of the organisation, particularly setting up the "Workhouse" including a one day Euro Workhouse due to happen in May. The work space is fully accessible.*

**Salary: £12,885.60 pa.** The post is available to job sharers.

*For a job description and application form please phone or write to LDAF, The Diorama, 14 Peto Place, NW1. 071-935 8999/5588 minicom.*

**Closing date: 5th January '91 - interviews 14th January '91.**

*LDAF is an Equal Opportunities Employer.*

**M&D**

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY

RESEARCH · COUNSELLING · CARE

**MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY GROUP****DIRECTOR OF SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Muscular Dystrophy Group seeks to establish the post of Director of Support Services based in our South London HQ.

The individual appointed will work in collaboration with the Group's Medical and Social Services Committee which is responsible for overseeing the support services provided by the Group for people with neuromuscular conditions and their families. The field force is currently comprised of 13 Family Care Officers, a National Training and Education Officer and a National Occupational Therapist and it is intended to expand the provision of these services. As well as running the existing operation, it will be the responsibility of the new Director to plan, develop and implement new services.

This challenging position will be appropriate for an individual who has senior administrative experience, preferably in both Social Services and the National Health Service, or in a National Charity, Government Department or University. The salary will be commensurate with the importance of this new position.

For further particulars and application form please write to Lyn Walker, Muscular Dystrophy Group, Nattrass House, 35 Macaulay Road, London SW4 0QP or phone 071-720 8055.

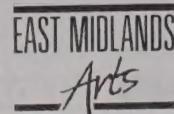


**EAST MIDLANDS ARTS**

is looking for a part-time Disability Researcher to assist in the production of an Arts Access Guide for people with disabilities. Duties will also include researching and maintaining data on arts opportunities for the disabled and assisting with the production of other material relating to Disability Arts. Salary: £9363 to £10,950 pro rata for 2½ days per week.

*East Midlands Arts is an equal opportunities employer and would particularly welcome applications for this post from people with a disability.*

Details from: East Midlands Arts, Mountfields House, Forest Road, Loughborough, Leics LE11 3HU. Tel: (0509) 218292. Closing date: 10th December 1990.



**DISABILITY RESEARCHER**  
6 weeks research  
to continue work regarding volunteers with disabilities and VSO's work overseas with disabled people.  
**SALARY:** £12,878 pa inc LW pro rata  
**CLOSING DATE:** (2 weeks after publication of advert)  
For further information apply to  
VSO Personnel Dept,  
317 Putney Br Rd, SW15 2PN  
VSO is an equal opportunities employer



If you would like DN on tape, or know anyone else who would, contact Gayle Mooney on 071-636 5020 ext 244.

**DATES FOR THE DISABLED – A BETTER LIFE –**  
36 Park Grove, Edgware, Middx. HA8 7SJ  
Tel: 01-958 1095 (5.15pm-7.15pm)  
01-958 9657 (4pm-8pm)



**Handicare**  
Friendship Agency  
For people with disabilities and caring, understanding able bodied persons  
Ladies should not be shy of applying!  
All enquiries to: **HANDICARE**  
The Wellington Centre  
52 Chevalier Street  
Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2PB  
Telephone: (0473) 226950

**FIND-A-FRIEND**

FEMALE, 17 looking for friendship or penpal, preferably male aged 18-24. I enjoy going to the cinema and listening to all kinds of music. I have spina bifida and mild epilepsy but walk unaided. Swansea area. Photo appreciated. Box No. 325.

**GAY GUY** seeks new friends in own age range (25-40). Am rehabilitated after childhood viral infection, polio-related. Now fully mobile, car driver, own house. Varied interests including music, travel, cooking, swimming. Box No. 326.

*There is a short waiting list for Find A Friend ads. Do not worry if your advert is not in immediately, it will probably appear next month.*

**MALE, SINGLE**, born 28.6.48., registered blind. Height 5 ft, brown hair and eyes, slight build. Good sense of humour, enjoys quiet life. Interests include walking, the country, travel, music, animals. Seeks quiet, caring, loving female aged 35-40 for permanent relationship. Box No. 328.

**YOUNG DISABLED WOMAN**, early 30s, would like to meet kind, fun-loving, intelligent, handsome young man (able bodied or disabled) for long lasting, loving relationship. I like arts, music, sports,

For Find A Friend ads please send a cheque or postal order for £3 payable to **Disability Now** with your ad. This is to help cover our costs.

travel and the good things in life. If you are adventurous, caring, love life and want an honest, loving friendship, then write to me! Box No. 329.

**HI, LADIES.** Are you worldly, but romantic? I am a male graduate with cp, 30 years old. I have a range of interests, and like to read everything. My dream is to meet an intelligent, politically-aware and open-minded lady (26-35, disabled or able bodied) for friendship/relationship. Must be mobile, and/or live in West Yorks area. Box No. 330.

**28 YEAR OLD** tetra woman would love to meet loving non-disabled man 30-40 for friendship. Box No. 327.

*To reply to Find-a-Friend indicate the Box Number and mark the envelope Private and Confidential. If you do not it will be opened. Send to DN, address on page 3.*

## **TOWER HAMLETS HEALTH AUTHORITY EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ADVISER (SALARY £14,585 to £16,774)**

Accountable to the Senior Equal Opportunities Adviser you will be responsible for developing and implementing an acting programme to support the Authority's policy on Equal Opportunities. The incumbent will be involved in all aspects of Equal Opportunities implementation but will focus on employment issues. Other duties will include advising managers on good working practices, raising awareness of Equal Opportunities issues, ethnic monitoring and identifying and developing appropriate training programmes.

Previous experience in a similar role would be desirable although not essential. However a sound knowledge of Equal Opportunities issues in employment and service provision is essential as is the ability to communicate effectively at all levels. Applicants should be able to demonstrate the ability to develop and coordinate the implementation of an appropriate programme.

If you feel you have the skills to tackle the above position and would like to discuss it further please contact **Shushila Patel, Senior Equal Opportunities Adviser on 071-377 7879.**

For an information pack and application form, please contact **Ms C.E. Fadel, Personnel Officer on 071-377 7120.**

**Closing date: 11th December, 1990.**

*Tower Hamlets Health Authority is an Equal Opportunities Employer and under represented groups are welcome to apply including ethnic minority people, people with disabilities and women.*

"WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES"

**DISABLED DRIVER'S ASSOCIATION**

We are a dynamic charity looking for two exceptional people to spearhead important new developments in our Association.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – £20,000 plus package**

Responsibilities include policy development and implementation, national and local representation and internal/external liaison. Advising and assisting members and other disabled people with personal mobility problems will be another role. The Executive director will work closely with the national committees and attend their evening and week-end meetings.

## **FUND-RAISING DIRECTOR – £20,000 plus package**

Will head our small but professional fund-raising unit. A major project is to raise £1.5 million for the redevelopment of our holiday hotel, and the long-term aim is to sustain future expansion of the Association. Will need initiative, be marketing oriented with successful experience of targeted appeals.

Present office location is in SE London but willing to consider elsewhere within M25 corridor. Both posts will involve travel for which expenses will be paid. All applications will be given equal consideration. We are an organisation of and for disabled people and candidates with disabilities will be regarded as having an additional qualification.

**Application form and job information from DDA, Drake House, 18 Creekside, London SE8 3DZ (081-692 7141 ext. 204).**

**Closing date for return of forms 7 January 1991.**

## **PRINCIPAL POLICY OFFICER (HOUSING AND PUBLIC WORKS)**

**£22,140 to £25,725 Inclusive of London Weighting**

The AMA is a voluntary organisation representing the interests of metropolitan local authorities in England.

Following the appointment of the present postholder as Assistant Borough Housing Officer with a London Borough, a vacancy arises in the Housing and Public Works Section for the post of Principal Policy Officer.

Reporting to the Under Secretary, the postholder will have considerable delegated responsibility for managing the extensive range of work covered by the Association's Housing Committee. A broad knowledge of local government and detailed familiarity with Local Authority housing policies

and practices are essential. The post carries a heavy workload, demanding a high level of commitment and the ability to undertake a diversity of tasks, while frequently meeting tight deadlines.

Black and ethnic minority people and those with disabilities are under represented at this level and we welcome applicants from these groups. People with registered disabilities who meet the job specification will be guaranteed an interview. The building is accessible to people with disabilities.

Relocation expenses provided if necessary. For details and an application form, write to: The Secretary, AMA, 35 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BJ. Telephone: 071 222 8100. Applications to be returned by Friday 7th December 1990.

This is a repeat advertisement – previous applicants need not apply.



**Association of Metropolitan Authorities**

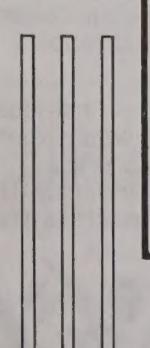
## **WHO'S IN THE NEWS?**

The Home Office hits the headlines every day, because our work affects society and people's daily lives. But you'll be surprised at the variety of people who deal with this important work – not many stuffy types here! Enthusiasm and willingness to learn are the qualities we look for; we offer the opportunity to pursue a worthwhile and varied career to the right people, whether young or mature and whatever your previous working experience.

You don't need school certificates or previous training to join us in our Westminster offices: our aptitude test will determine your suitability to succeed in the job. But you won't need to take the test if you have 2 acceptable GCSE/GCE/CSE passes including English language, or equivalent qualifications.

**HOME  
OFFICE**

We welcome applications from candidates regardless of disability, ethnic origin, sex or marital status. People with disabilities are currently under-represented and their applications are particularly welcome.



Starting salary including London weighting is £7,932 (at age 19 or above), rising to £9,854. After 12 months you will also receive an extra £400 a year. We work a five day week of 36 hours with flexitime nearly always available. Other benefits include assistance with further education, interest-free season ticket loans, non-contributory pension scheme, staff restaurants, sports and social clubs, 22 days paid holiday (25 days, or 5 weeks, after 12 months) plus 10½ days public and privilege holidays.

If you are 16-58 years old, and would like information about the different things we do and an application form, please telephone 071-217 0134/0140/0141 (answering machine operates outside office hours) or write to Home Office Recruitment Section, Room 202, Grenadier House, 99-105 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2DD.

## SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**Disability Assessment Officer**

**Salary:** £11,241-£13,614/£16,476 per annum (Progression beyond £13,614 is subject to satisfactory assessment.)

Relocation allowance payable in certain cases.

Assessing the needs of disabled children and assuming the duties of appropriate officer in accordance with Section 5 of the Disabled Persons (Services Consultation and Representation) Act 1986 are the responsibilities of newly created posts in this Authority.

Further similar posts are anticipated in an effort to develop an effective service to young people, and their families, as they leave full-time education.

The current geographical area covered is Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest, based in Wendron Day Centre, adjacent to the Area Office. Bromsgrove is a pleasant market town, on the edge of the beautiful Lickey Hills, set in the Worcestershire countryside. It is just minutes away from the M42, and is in easy reach of both Birmingham and London.

This is exciting and challenging work not previously faced by Social Services.

**Informal enquiries to:** John Gill, Principal Officer, Physical Disability on (0905) 766926.

Application forms from Angela Boyle, Social Services Department, County Offices, Windsor Street, Bromsgrove. Tel. (0527) 579824.

**Hereford and Worcester County Council****SPINAL INJURIES ASSOCIATION**

**Because life doesn't stop when you're paralysed**

**INDEPENDENT LIVING ADVOCATE**

**£10,914 - £13,527**

SIA is seeking a well-motivated person with an understanding of independent living and disability issues to help spinal cord injured people set up personal assistance schemes when they return to the community. This challenging new post will be based at the National Spinal Injuries Centre, Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Aylesbury. It is full-time and will be initially for a fixed term two year contract. The successful candidate will have the ability to liaise with a wide range of health and social services professionals. Experience of setting up personal assistance schemes would be a positive advantage.

**Closing date 5th December: Interviews week commencing 17th December.**

**ASSISTANT WELFARE OFFICER**

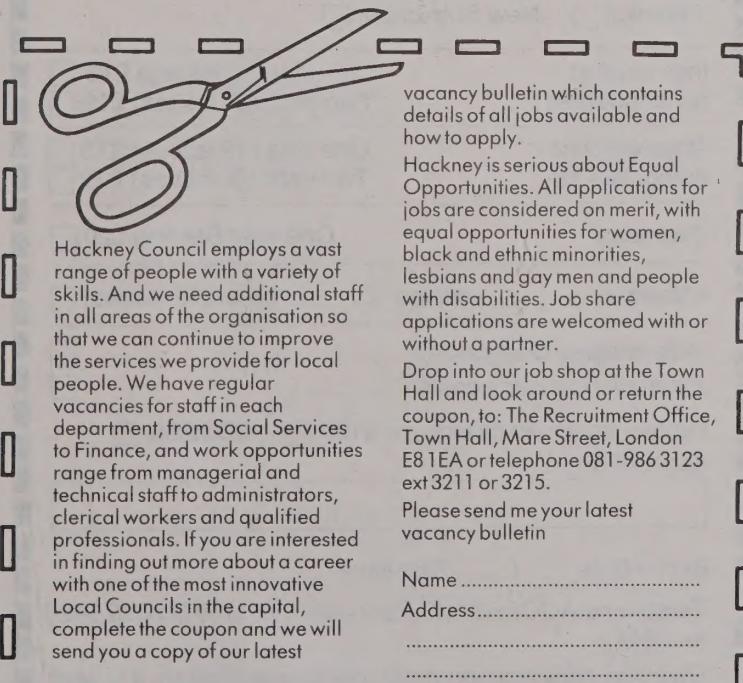
**£10,935 - £11,859 (inc OLW)**

We are also looking for someone to join a team providing a specialist service nationwide to people with spinal cord injuries. This full-time post is based in Muswell Hill in N. London. The postholder will be required to handle enquiries on a wide range of subjects including welfare rights, housing, independent living and continence. Experience in these areas would be an advantage – however, a positive and sensitive approach to disabled people and their families is more important than any formal qualification. Job specification and salary currently under review.

**Closing date 5th December: Interviews: 10th December.**

**For Job Description and Application Form, ring: Welfare Secretary, SIA, Newpoint House, 76 St James's Lane, London N10 3DF. (Tel: 081-444 2121).**

**SIA positively welcomes applications from disabled people and we make every effort to meet individual needs.**



**cut it out!** HACKNEY COUNCIL Working for local people

Deadlines for January issue: booking by 7 December, camera ready artwork/ copy by 12 December.

**TO ADVERTISE YOUR VACANCIES/COURSES**

Please contact the Advertisement Manager, Don Neal, Kingslea Press Limited, 12 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road, London SE16 2XU. Telephone: 071-252 1362. Fax: 071-237 8019.

**THE NATIONAL COLLEGE****COURSES:**

A full range of courses for students with physical and sensory disabilities, residential and day. CPVE, GCSE, BTEC (First Level and National), A level, RSA, City and Guilds, LCC, Pitmans; access courses (pre-degree) in Art, Engineering Studies, Business Studies, Social Sciences. Course can be broadened with subjects taught at Tile Hill College of Further Education.

**ACADEMIC FACILITIES:**

A wide range of computer and Information Technology facilities in the Supported Self Study Centre (including all-day tutor support).

Three networked Computer Suites to support all courses.

Art, Photography and Science Suites.

Extensive video production and editing facilities based in the fully equipped Theatre.

Individual study support with a professional team of assistants.

**NATIONAL ACCESS CENTRE:**

The National Co-ordinating centre for the National Federation of ACCESS Centres (NFAC); assessment and support

*The National College for Students  
with Physical and Sensory Disabilities*

Hereward College of Further Education,  
Bramston Crescent, Tile Hill Lane, Coventry CV4 9SW  
Telephone: (0203) 461231 Fax: (0203) 694305

**Hereward COLLEGE****DISABILITY ARTS MAGAZINE**

comes out

in  
**MARCH '91**

This quarterly magazine is controlled, run and staffed by people with disabilities. D.A.M. provides a market for the work of disabled people.

Our remit is to cover disability arts (arts based on the disability experience); access to the arts; representations of disability in the arts, and the arts activities of people with disabilities.

**WANTED!****Subscribers**

Subscriptions £12 for 4 issues (unwaged £6)

Specimen issue £4 (unwaged £2)

NB This is a special offer only valid 'till 1.3.91.

**Submissions**

Send anything that you consider suitable to the magazine . . . poetry, short stories, photographs, cartoons, articles, artwork, mini-epics, reviews etc. etc. . . and it will be considered for publication. (ONLY material accompanied by a self-addressed envelope will be returned). If a contribution is accepted, payment will be made.

NB Only disabled people will be paid for contributions.

**Columnists**

**3 news columnists:** to write a column on news from their region each issue and to write a major article once a year. The columnists are to be recruited from the areas whose Regional Arts Association are funding the magazine. That is a columnist from within the areas of Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts, Northern Arts and Yorkshire Arts. Each of these packages will be worth £500 p.a.

**1 film columnist:** to write a column each issue and one major feature article each year. This package will be worth £600 p.a. NB Only disabled people need apply to be columnists.

**Press Releases**

D.A.M. is happy to receive press releases. However it is a waste of our time and your money sending PR that is not within the magazine's remit. Equally PR should take cognisance of publication and copy dates.

**Advertisements**

Copy should be sent to the Advertisement Manager at the magazine, taking note of publication and copy dates.

£89

£49

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This is a special offer which is only valid 'till 1.3.91.

**Issue**

Issue 1 (Spring '91)

Issue 2 (Summer '91)

Issue 3 (Autumn '91)

Issue 4 (Winter '91)

**Publication date**

25 March

24 June

16 September

9 December

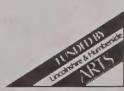
**(Copy deadline)**

(18 February)

(20 May)

(12 August)

(4 November)



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# Thousands show at demo

Three and a half thousand disabled people took to the streets last month to demand a proper income, but the turnout was a fraction of what organisers expected and was pushed off the nation's front pages by poll tax demonstration violence on the same day.

Between two and three thousand came to Trafalgar Square, and 500 each to Manchester and Glasgow. It was Britain's biggest disability demonstration, but the turnout was one fifth of the 15,000 predicted by the Disability Benefits Consortium, who organised it.

MPs of the three main parties either spoke or sent messages of support. "In the last ten years average earnings have gone up 20 per cent but average disability benefits have gone up one per cent in real terms," said Labour's Jack Ashley.

Ron Goulden of the Manchester Disability Forum was pleased that people with different disabilities came together.

In Glasgow, Bill Fisher of the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People called for full citizenship for disabled people.

Some activists criticised the apathy of large disability groups.

"There was lack of support by such organisations as The Spastics Society and RADAR," said Ron Goulden. "I would have thought that people could have



Over two thousand people came to Trafalgar Square

CHRIS KILICK

had transport to get there."

"We told all our local groups and centres about the demonstration and people could choose whether they wanted to go or not," responded Brian Lamb,

campaigns and parliamentary officer at The Spastics Society.

"RADAR did everything it had to do to help with the campaign," said Bert Massie, director of RADAR.

# Banks challenged on discrimination

High street banks are coming under pressure to change their policy towards people with cerebral palsy after one woman met with "blind discrimination" when she tried to open a Girobank account.

Girobank's south east office told Janice McKee, 27, to try a "more appropriate institution" because she cannot hold a pen and the bank could not provide close supervision.

She eventually opened an account with the Halifax building society in September, but does not have a chequebook and has to go to the same branch each time. Staff who know her there sign transactions for her.

"I am not happy about Girobank's attitude. I see it as a personal insult," said Janice McKee, who moved out of a long-stay home in September.

She would rather identify herself by using alternative means such as a fingerprint.

Most banks suggested Janice should make someone her legal representative.

"This is neither practical, as she lives independently, or necessary, as she is in full possession of her intellectual faculties," said her social worker, Jan Clough. She added that such suggestions implied that staff

thought Janice had a mental handicap.

"It is a clear case of blind discrimination," said Paul Simpson, policy officer for education at the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR), who took up Janice's case. "It's very bad business sense as well."



Janice McKee: "not happy".

Meanwhile, Girobank has apologised and said it wants further pressure so that the issue can be tackled.

"Things will get more difficult in the future when people start moving into the community," said Sean Kerr, senior residential care social worker at Drummonds, a Spastics Society residential home in Colchester which houses 50 people.

The centre is to write to 17 banks and building societies to complain that there is no consistent policy towards people who cannot sign their names.

**Only a tanner to keep you in touch!**

# Disability Now

**Britain's leading disability newspaper gives you**

- all the news that matters
- advice on benefits, services and equipment
- the inside story on everything from car insurance to having a baby
- the chance to share your problems and express your views

- sport, fashion and the arts
- the pick of the job market
- a way of belonging to the disability movement.

**If you are a disabled person, a parent or a professional, it pays to stay in touch. Subscribe today!**



**All subscribers get a free DN keyring too.**

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